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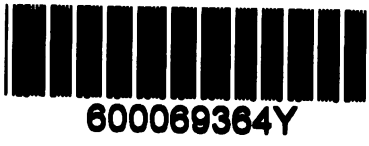
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THE

FORTUNES OF GLENCORE.

BY

CHARLES LEVER.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

CHAPMAN AND HALL, 193, PICCADILLY.

MDCCCLVII.

249. w. 164.

TO

SIR JAMES HUDSON, K.C.B.,

H.B.M.'S MINISTER AT TURIN.

My dear Hudson,

If there be anything good in these volumes, I know of no one more capable than yourself to detect and appreciate it. If they be all valueless, who is there so ready to pardon faults and overlook shortcomings? With a tolerably wide acquaintance, I do not know of your superior in either quality; and in this assurance I dedicate them to you, very proud as I am to write your name on the same page with that of

Yours faithfully,

CHARLES LEVER.

NOTICE.

I AM unwilling to suffer this tale to leave my hands without a word of explanation to my reader. If I have never disguised from myself the grounds of any humble success I have attained to as a writer of fiction,—if I have always had before me the fact that to movement and action, the stir of incident, and a certain light-heartedness and gaiety of temperament, more easy to impart to others than to repress in oneself, I have owed much, if not all, of whatever popularity I have enjoyed, I have yet felt, or fancied

that I felt, that it would be in the delineation of very different scenes, and the portraiture of very different emotions, that I should reap what I would reckon as a real success. This conviction, or impression if you will, has become stronger with years and with the knowledge of life; years have imparted, and time has but confirmed me in the notion, that any skill I possess lies in the detection of character, and the unravelment of that tangled skein which makes up human motives.

I am well aware that no error is more common than to mistake one's own powers; nor does anything more contribute to this error than a sense of self-depreciation for what the world has been pleased to deem successful in us. To test my conviction, or to abandon it as a delusion for ever, I have written the present story of "Glencore."

I make little pretension to the claim of interesting,—as little do I aspire to the higher credit of instructing. All I have attempted —all I have striven to accomplish,—is the faithful portraiture of character, the close analysis of motives, and correct observation as to some of the manners and modes of thought which mark the age we live in.

Opportunities of society, as well as natural inclination, have alike disposed me to such studies. I have stood over the game of life very patiently for many a year, and though I may have grieved over the narrow fortune which has prevented me from "cutting in," I have consoled myself by the thought of all the anxieties defeat might have cost me, all the chagrin I had suffered were I to have risen a loser. Besides this, I have learned to know and estimate what are the qualities which win success in life,

and what the gifts by which men dominate above their fellows.

If in the world of well-bred life the incidents and events be fewer, because the friction is less than in the classes where vicissitudes of fortune are more frequent, the play of passion, the moods of temper, and the changeful varieties of nature, are often very strongly developed, shadowed and screened though they be by the polished conventionalities of society. To trace and mark these has long constituted one of the pleasures of my life; if I have been able to impart even a portion of that gratification to my reader, I will not deem the effort in vain, nor the "Fortunes of Glencore" a failure.

Let me add, that although certain traits of character in some of the individuals of my story may seem to indicate sketches of real

personages, there is but one character in the whole book drawn entirely from life. This is Billy Traynor. Not only have I had a sitter for this picture, but he is alive and hearty at the hour I am writing. For the others, they are purely, entirely fictitious. Certain details, certain characteristics, I have of course borrowed,—as he who would mould a human face must needs have copied an eye, a nose, or a chin, from some existent model; but beyond this I have not gone, nor, indeed, have I found, in all my experience of life, that fiction ever suggests what has not been implanted, unconsciously, by memory; originality in the delineation of character being little beyond a new combination of old materials derived from that source.

I wish I could as easily apologise for the faults and blemishes of my story as I can detect and deplore them; but, like the fail-

ings in one's nature, they are very often difficult to correct even when acknowledged. I have, therefore, but to throw myself once more upon the indulgence which, "old offender" that I am, has never forsaken me, and subscribe myself,

Your devoted friend and servant,

C. L.

THE

FORTUNES OF GLENCORE.

CHAPTER I.

A LONELY LANDSCAPE.

WHERE that singularly beautiful inlet of the sea known in the west of Ireland as the Killeries, after narrowing to a mere strait, expands into a bay, stands the ruin of the ancient Castle of Glencore. With the bold steep sides of Ben Greggan behind, and the broad blue Atlantic in front, the proud keep would seem to have occupied a spot that might have bid defiance to the boldest assailant. The estuary itself here seems entirely landlocked, and resembles, in the wild, fantastic outline of the mountains around, a

Norwegian fiord, rather than a scene in our own tamer landscape. The small village of Leenane, which stands on the Galway shore, opposite to Glencore, presents the only trace of habitation in this wild and desolate district, for the country around is poor, and its soil offers little to repay the task of the husbandman. Fishing is then the chief, if not the sole resource of those who pass their lives in this solitary region; and thus, in every little creek or inlet of the shore may be seen the stout craft of some hardy venturer, and nets, and tackle, and such-like gear, lie drying on every rocky eminence. We have said that Glencore was a ruin, but still its vast proportions, yet traceable in massive fragments of masonry, displayed specimens of various eras of architecture, from the rudest tower of the twelfth century to the more ornate style of a later period; while artificial embankments and sloped sides of grass showed the remains of what once had been terrace and "parterre," the successors, it might be presumed, of fosse and parapet. Many a tale of cruelty and oppression, many a story of suffering and sorrow clung to those old walls, for they had

formed the home of a haughty and a cruel race, the last descendant of which died at the close of the past century. The Castle of Glencore, with the title, had now descended to a distant relation of the house, who had repaired and so far restored the old residence as to make it habitable—that is to say, four bleak and lofty chambers were rudely furnished, and about as many smaller ones fitted for servant accommodation, but no effort at embellishment, not even the commonest attempt at neatness, was bestowed on the grounds or the garden; and in this state it remained for some five-and-twenty or thirty years, when the tidings reached the little village of Leenane that his lordship was about to return to Glencore, and fix his residence there.

Such an event was of no small moment in such a locality, and many were the speculations as to what might be the consequence of his coming. Little, or indeed nothing, was known of Lord Glencore; his only visit to the neighbourhood had occurred many years before, and lasted but for a day. He had arrived suddenly, and, taking a boat at the ferry, as it was called, crossed over to

the Castle, whence he returned at nightfall, to depart as hurriedly as he came.

Of those who had seen him in this brief visit the accounts were vague and most contradictory. Some called him handsome and well built; others said he was a dark-looking, downcast man, with a sickly and forbidding aspect. None, however, could record one single word he had spoken, nor could even gossips pretend to say that he gave utterance to any opinion about the place or the people. The mode in which the estate was managed gave as little insight into the character of the proprietor. If no severity was displayed to the few tenants on the property, there was no encouragement given to their efforts at improvement; a kind of cold neglect was the only feature discernible, and many went so far as to say that if any cared to forget the payment of his rent, the chances were it might never be demanded of him; the great security against such a venture, however, lay in the fact that the land was held at a mere nominal rental, and few would have risked his tenure by such an experiment.

It was little to be wondered at that Lord

Glencore was not better known in that secluded spot, since even in England his name was scarcely heard of. His fortune was very limited, and he had no political influence whatever, not possessing a seat in the Upper House; so that, as he spent his life abroad, he was almost totally forgotten in his own country.

All that Debrett could tell of him was comprised in a few lines, recording simply that he was sixth Viscount Glencore and Loughdooner; born in the month of February, 180—, and married in August, 18—, to Clarissa Isabella, second daughter of Sir Guy Clifford, of Wytchley, Baronet; by whom he had issue, Charles Conyngham Massey, born 6th June, 18—. There closed the notice.

Strange and quaint things are these short biographies, with little beyond the barren fact that "he had lived" and "he had died;" and yet with all the changes of this work-a-day world, with its din, and turmoil, and gold-seeking, and "progress," men cannot divest themselves of reverence for birth and blood, and the veneration for high descent remains an instinct of humanity. Sneer as

men will at "heaven-born legislators," laugh as you may at the "tenth transmitter of a foolish face," there is something eminently impressive in the fact of a position acquired by deeds that date back to centuries, and preserved inviolate to the successor of him who fought at Agincourt or at Cressy. If ever this religion shall be impaired, the fault be with those who have derogated from their great prerogative, and forgotten to make illustrious by example what they have inherited illustrious by descent.

When the news first reached the neighbourhood that a lord was about to take up his residence in the Castle, the most extravagant expectations were conceived of the benefits to arise from such a source. The very humblest already speculated on the advantages his wealth was to diffuse, and the thousand little channels into which his affluence would be directed. The ancient traditions of the place spoke of a time of boundless profusion, when troops of mounted followers used to accompany the old barons, and when the lough itself used to be covered with boats, with the armorial bearings of Glencore floating proudly from their mastheads.

There were old men then living who remembered as many as two hundred labourers being daily employed on the grounds and gardens of the Castle; and the most fabulous stories were told of fortunes accumulated by those who were lucky enough to have saved the rich earnings of that golden period.

Coloured as such speculations were with all the imaginative warmth of the west, it was a terrible shock to such sanguine fancies when they beheld a middle-aged, sad-looking man arrive in a simple post-chaise, accompanied by his son, a child of six or seven years of age, and a single servant—a grim-looking old dragoon corporal, who neither invited intimacy nor rewarded it. It was not, indeed, for a long time that they could believe that this was "my lord," and that this solitary attendant was the whole of that great retinue they had so long been expecting; nor, indeed, could any evidence less strong than Mrs. Mulcahy's, of the Post-office, completely satisfy them on the subject. The address of certain letters and newspapers to the Lord Viscount Glencore was, however, a testimony beyond dispute; so that nothing remained but to revenge themselves on the

unconscious author of their self-deception for the disappointment he gave them. This, it is true, required some ingenuity, for they scarcely ever saw him, nor could they ascertain a single fact of his habits or mode of life.

He never crossed the "Lough," as the inlet of the sea, about three miles in width, was called. He as rigidly excluded the peasantry from the grounds of the Castle; and, save an old fisherman, who carried his letter-bag to and fro, and a few labourers in the spring and autumn, none ever invaded the forbidden precincts.

Of course, such privacy paid its accustomed penalty; and many an explanation, of a kind little flattering, was circulated to account for so ungenial an existence. Some alleged that he had committed some heavy crime against the State, and was permitted to pass his life there, on the condition of perpetual imprisonment; others, that his wife had deserted him, and that in his forlorn condition he had sought out a spot to live and die in, unnoticed and unknown; a few ascribed his solitude to debt; while others were divided in opinion between

charges of misanthropy and avarice — to either of which accusations his lonely and simple life fully exposed him.

In time, however, people grew tired of repeating stories to which no new evidence added any features of interest. They lost the zest for a scandal which ceased to astonish, and "my lord" was as much forgotten, and his existence as unspoken of, as though the old towers had once again become the home of the owl and the jackdaw.

It was now about eight years since "the lord" had taken up his abode at the Castle, when one evening, a raw and gusty night of December, the little skiff of the fisherman was seen standing in for shore—a sight somewhat uncommon, since she always crossed the "Lough" in time for the morning's mail.

"There's another man aboard, too," said a bystander from the little group that watched the boat, as she neared the harbour; "I think it's Mr. Craggs."

"You're right enough, Sam—it's the corporal; I know his cap, and the short tail of hair he wears under it. What can bring him at this time of night?"

"He's going to bespeak a quarter of Tim Healey's beef, maybe," said one, with a grin of malicious drollery.

"Mayhap its askin' us all to spend the Christmas he'd be," said another.

"Whisht! or he'll hear you," muttered a third; and at the same instant the sail came clattering down, and the boat glided swiftly past, and entered a little natural creek close beneath where they stood.

"Who has got a horse and a jaunting-car?" cried the Corporal, as he jumped on shore. "I want one for Clifden directly."

"It's fifteen miles—devil a less," cried one.

"Fifteen! no, but eighteen! Kiely's bridge is bruck down, and you'll have to go by Gortnamuck."

"Well, and if he has, can't he take the cut?"

"He can't."

"Why not? Didn't I go that way last week?"

"Well, and if you did, didn't you lame your baste?"

"'Twasn't the cut did it."

"It was — sure I know better — Billy Moore tould me."

"Billy's a liar!"

Such and such-like comments and contradictions were very rapidly exchanged, and already the debate was waxing warm, when Mr. Craggs's authoritative voice interposed with—

"Billy Moore be blowed! I want to know if I can have a car and horse?"

"To be sure! why not?—who says you can't!" chimed in a chorus.

"If you go to Clifden under five hours, my name isn't Terry Lynch," said an old man in rabbitskin breeches.

"I'll engage, if Barny will give me the blind mare, to drive him there under four."

"Bother!" said the Rabbitskin, in a tone of contempt.

"But where's the horse?" cried the Corporal.

"Ay, that's it," said another; "where's the horse?"

"Is there none to be found in the village?" asked Craggs, eagerly.

"Divil a horse barrin' an ass. Barny's

mare has the staggers the last fortnight, and Mrs. Kyle's pony broke his two knees on Tuesday, carrying sea-weed up the rocks."

"But I must go to Clifden; I must be there to-night," said Craggs.

"It's on foot, then, you'll have to do it," said the Rabbitskin.

"Lord Glencore's dangerously ill, and needs a doctor," said the Corporal, bursting out with a piece of most uncommon communicativeness. "Is there none of you will give his horse for such an errand?"

"Arrah, musha!—it's a pity!" and such-like expressions of compassionate import, were muttered on all sides; but no more active movement seemed to flow from the condolence, while in a lower tone were added such expressions as, "Sorra mend him—if he wasn't a naygar, wouldn't he have a horse of his own? It's a droll lord he is, to be begging the loan of a baste!"

Something like a malediction arose to the Corporal's lips; but restraining it, and with a voice thick from passion, he said,

"I'm ready to pay you—to pay you ten times over the worth of your——"

"You needn't curse the horse, anyhow,"

interposed Rabbitskin, while, with a significant glance at his friends around him, he slyly intimated that it would be as well to adjourn the debate—a motion as quickly obeyed as it was mooted; for in less than five minutes Craggs was standing beside the quay, with no other companion than a blind beggarwoman, who, perfectly regardless of his distress, continued energetically to draw attention to her own.

"A little fivepenny bit, my lord—the laste trifle your honour's glory has in the corner of your pocket, that you'll never miss, but that'll sweeten ould Molly's tay to-night? There, acushla, have pity on 'the dark,' and that you may see glory——"

But Craggs did not wait for the remainder, but, deep in his own thoughts, sauntered down towards the village. Already had the others retreated within their homes; and now all was dark and cheerless along the little straggling street.

"And this is a Christian country!—this a land that people tell you abounds in kindness and good-nature!" said he, in an accent of sarcastic bitterness.

"And who'll say the reverse?" answered

a voice from behind, and, turning, he beheld the little hunchbacked fellow who carried the mail on foot from Oughterard, a distance of sixteen miles, over a mountain, and who was popularly known as "Billy the Bag," from the little leather sack which seemed to form part of his attire. "Who'll stand up and tell me it's not a fine country in every sinse—for natural beauties, for antiquities, for elegant men and lovely females, for quarries of marble and mines of gould?"

Craggs looked contemptuously at the figure who thus declaimed of Ireland's wealth and grandeur, and, in a sneering tone, said,

"And with such riches on every side, why do you go barefoot—why are you in rags, my old fellow?"

"Isn't there poor everywhere? If the world was all gould and silver, what would be the precious metals—tell me that? Is it because there's a little cripple like myself here, that them mountains yonder isn't of copper, and iron, and cobalt? Come over with me after I lave the bags at the office,

and I'll show you bits of every one I speak of."

"I'd rather you'd show me a doctor, my worthy fellow," said Craggs, sighing.

"I'm the nearest thing to that same going," replied Billy. "I can breathe a vein against any man in the barony. I can't say, that for any articular congestion of the aortic valves, or for a sero-pulmonic diathesis —d'ye mind?—that there isn't as good as me; but for the ould school of physic, the humoral diagnostic touch, who can beat me?"

"Will you come with me across the lough, and see my lord, then?" said Craggs, who was glad even of such aid in his emergency.

"And why not, when I lave the bags?" said Billy, touching the leather sack as he spoke.

If the Corporal was not without his misgivings as to the skill and competence of his companion, there was something in the fluent volubility of the little fellow that overawed and impressed him, while his words were uttered in a rich mellow voice, that gave them a sort of solemn persuasiveness.

"Were you always on the road?" asked the Corporal, curious to learn some particulars of his history.

"No, sir; I was twenty things before I took to the bags. I was a poor scholar for four years; I kept school in Erris; I was 'on' the ferry in Dublin with my fiddle for eighteen months; and I was a bear in Liverpool for part of a winter."

"A bear!" exclaimed Craggs.

"Yes, sir. It was an Italian—one Pipo Chiassi by name—that lost his beast at Manchester, and persuaded me, as I was about the same stature, to don the sable, and perform in his place. After that I took to writin' for the papers—*The Skibbereen Celt*—and supported myself very well till it broke. But here we are at the office, so I'll step in, and get my fiddle, too, if you've no objection."

The Corporal's meditations scarcely were of a kind to reassure him, as he thought over the versatile character of his new friend; but the case offered no alternative—it was Billy or nothing—since to reach Clifden on foot would be the labour of many hours, and in the interval his master should be left ut-

terly alone. While he was thus musing, Billy reappeared, with a violin under one arm and a much-worn quarto under the other.

"This," said he, touching the volume, "is the 'Whole Art and Mystery of Physic,' by one Fabricius, of Aquapendente; and if we don't find a cure for the case down here, take my word for it, it's among the *morba ignota*, as Paracelsus says."

"Well, come along," said Craggs, impatiently, and set off at a speed that, notwithstanding Billy's habits of foot-travel, kept him at a sharp trot. A few minutes more saw them, with canvas spread, skimming across the lough, towards Glencore.

"Glencore—Glencore!" muttered Billy once or twice to himself, as the swift boat bounded through the hissing surf. "Did you ever hear Lady Lucy's Lament?" And he struck a few chords with his fingers as he sang:

"'I care not for your trellised vine,
I love the dark woods on the shore;
Nor all the towers along the Rhine
Are dear to me as old Glencore.

The rugged cliff, Ben-Creggan high,
Re-echoing the Atlantic roar,
Are mingling with the seagull's cry
My welcome back to old Glencore.'"

"And then there's a chorus."

"That's a signal to us to make haste," said the Corporal, pointing to a bright flame which suddenly shot up on the shore of the lough. "Put out an oar to leeward there, and keep her up to the wind."

And Billy, perceiving his minstrelsy unattended to, consoled himself by humming over, for his own amusement, the remainder of his ballad.

The wind freshened as the night grew darker, and heavy seas repeatedly broke on the bow, and swept over the boat in sprayey showers.

"It's that confounded song of yours has got the wind up," said Craggs, angrily; "stand by the sheet, and stop your croning!"

"That's an *error vulgaris*, attributing to music marine disasters," said Billy, calmly; "it arose out of a mistake about one Orpheus."

"Slack off there!" cried Craggs, as a

squall struck the boat, and laid her almost over.

Billy, however, had obeyed the mandate promptly, and she soon righted, and held on her course.

"I wish they'd show the light again on shore," muttered the Corporal; "the night is black as pitch."

"Keep the top of the mountain a little to windward, and you're all right," said Billy. "I know the lough well; I used to come here all hours, day and night, once, spearing salmon."

"And smuggling, too!" added Craggs.

"Yes, sir; brandy, and tay, and pigtail, for Mister Sheares, in Oughterard."

"What became of him?" asked Craggs.

"He made a fortune and died, and his son married a lady!"

"Here comes another; throw her head up in the wind," cried Craggs.

This time the order came too late; for the squall struck her with the suddenness of a shot, and she canted over till her keel lay out of water, and, when she righted, it was with the white surf boiling over her.

"She's a good boat, then, to stand that," said Billy, as he struck a light for his pipe, with all the coolness of one perfectly at his ease; and Craggs, from that very moment, conceived a favourable opinion of the little hunchback.

"Now we're in the smooth water, Corporal," cried Billy; "let her go a little free."

And, obedient to the advice, he ran the boat swiftly along till she entered a small creek, so sheltered by the highlands that the water within was still as a mountain tarn.

"You never made the passage on a worse night, I'll be bound," said Craggs, as he sprang on shore.

"Indeed and I did, then," replied Billy. "I remember—it was two days before Christmas—we were blown out to say in a small boat, not more than the half of this, and we only made the west side of Arran Island after thirty-six hours' beating and tacking. I wrote an account of it for *The Tyrawly Regenerator*, commencing with,

"'The elemential conflict that with tremendious violence raged, ravaged, and ruined the adamantine foundations of our western

coast, on Tuesday, the 23rd of December——'"

"Come along, come along," said Craggs; "we've something else to think of."

And with this admonition, very curtly bestowed, he stepped out briskly on the path towards Glencore.

CHAPTER II.

GLENCORE CASTLE.

When the Corporal, followed by Billy, entered the gloomy hall of the Castle, they found two or three country people conversing in a low but eager voice together, who speedily turned towards them, to learn if the doctor had come.

"Here's all I could get in the way of a doctor," said Craggs, pushing Billy towards them as he spoke.

"Faix, and ye might have got worse," muttered a very old man; "Billy Traynor has the 'lucky hand.'"

"How is my lord, now, Nelly?" asked the Corporal of a woman who, with bare feet, and dressed in the humblest fashion of the peasantry, appeared.

"He's getting weaker and weaker, sir; I

believe he's sinking. I'm glad it's Billy is come; I'd rather see him than all the doctors in the country."

"Follow me," said Craggs, giving a signal to step lightly. And he led the way up a narrow stone stair, with a wall on either hand. Traversing a long, low corridor, they reached a door, at which having waited for a second or two to listen, Craggs turned the handle and entered. The room was very large and lofty, and, seen in the dim light of a small lamp upon the hearthstone, seemed even more spacious than it was. The oaken floor was uncarpeted, and a very few articles of furniture occupied the walls. In one corner stood a large bed, the heavy curtains of which had been gathered up on the roof, the better to admit air to the sick man.

As Billy drew nigh with cautious steps, he perceived that, although worn and wasted by long illness, the patient was a man still in the very prime of life. His dark hair and beard, which he wore long, were untinged with grey, and his forehead showed no touch of age. His dark eyes were wide open, and his lips slightly parted, his whole features exhibiting an expression of energetic action,

even to wildness. Still he was sleeping; and, as Craggs whispered, he seldom slept otherwise, even when in health. With all the quietness of a trained practitioner, Billy took down the watch that was pinned to the curtain and proceeded to count the pulse.

"A hundred and thirty-eight," muttered he, as he finished; and then gently displacing the bedclothes, laid his hand upon the heart.

With a long-drawn sigh, like that of utter weariness, the sick man moved his head round and fixed his eyes upon him.

"The doctor!" said he, in a deep-toned but feeble voice. "Leave me, Craggs—leave me alone with him."

And the Corporal slowly retired, turning as he went to look back towards the bed, and evidently going with reluctance.

"Is it fever?" asked the sick man, in a faint but unfaltering accent.

"It's a kind of cerebral congestion—a matter of them membranes that's over the brain, with, of course, febrilis generalis."

The accentuation of these words, marked as it was by the strongest provincialism of

the peasant, attracted the sick man's attention, and he bent upon him a look at once searching and severe.

"What are you—who are you?" cried he, angrily.

"What I am isn't so aisy to say; but who I am is clean beyond me."

"Are you a doctor?" asked the sick man, fiercely.

"I'm afeard I'm not, in the sense of a *gradum Universitatis*—a diplomia; but sure maybe Paracelsus himself just took to it, like me, having a vocation, as one might say."

"Ring that bell," said the other, peremptorily.

And Billy obeyed without speaking.

"What do you mean by this, Craggs?" said the Viscount, trembling with passion. "Who have you brought me? What beggar have you picked off the highway? Or is he the travelling fool of the district?"

But the anger that supplied strength hitherto now failed to impart energy, and he sank back wasted and exhausted. The Corporal bent over him, and spoke something in

a low whisper, but whether the words were heard or not, the sick man now lay still, breathing heavily.

"Can you do nothing for him?" asked Craggs, peevishly—"nothing but anger him?"

"To be sure I can if you let me," said Billy, producing a very ancient lancet-case of box-wood tipped with ivory. "I'll just take a dash of blood from the temporial artery, to relieve the cerebrum, and then we'll put cowld on his head, and keep him quiet."

And with a promptitude that showed at least self-confidence, he proceeded to accomplish the operation, every step of which he effected skilfully and well.

"There, now," said he, feeling the pulse, as the blood continued to flow freely, "the circulation is relieved at once; it's the same as opening a sluice in a mill-dam. He's better already."

"He looks easier," said Craggs.

"Ay, and he feels it," continued Billy. "Just notice the respiratory organs, and see how easy the intercostials is doing their

work now. Bring me a bowl of clean water, some vinegar, and any ould rags you have."

Craggs obeyed, but not without a sneer at the direction.

"All over the head," said Billy; "all over it—back and front—and with the blessing of the Virgin, I'll have that hair off of him if he isn't cooler towards evening."

So saying, he covered the sick man with the wetted cloths, and bathed his hands in the cooling fluid.

"Now to exclude the light and save the brain from stimulation and excitation," said Billy, with a pompous enunciation of the last syllables; "and then *quies*—rest—peace!"

And with this direction, imparted with a caution to enforce its benefit, he moved stealthily towards the door and passed out.

"What do you think of him?" asked the Corporal, eagerly.

"He'll do—he'll do," said Billy. "He's a sanguineous temperament, and he'll bear the lancet. It's just like weatherin' a point at say. If you have a craft that will carry canvas, there's always a chance for you."

"He perceived that you were not a doctor," said Craggs, when they reached the corridor.

"Did he faix?" cried Billy, half indignantly. "He might have perceived that I didn't come in a coach; that I hadn't my hair powdered, nor gold knee-buckles in my smallclothes; but, for all that, it would be going too far to say that I wasn't a doctor! 'Tis the same with physic and poetry—you take to it, or you don't take to it! There's chaps, ay, and far from stupid ones either, that couldn't compose you ten hexameters if ye'd put them on a hot griddle for it; and there's others that would talk rhyme rather than rayson! And so with the *ars medicatrix*—everybody hasn't an eye for a hectic, or an ear for a cough—*non contigit cuique adire Corintheum.* 'Tisn't every one can toss pancakes, as Horace says."

"Hush—be still!" muttered Craggs, "here's the young master." And as he spoke, a youth of about fifteen, well grown and handsome, but poorly, even meanly clad, approached them.

"Have you seen my father? What do you think of him?" asked he, eagerly.

"'Tis a critical state he's in, your honour," said Billy, bowing; "but I think he'll come round—*deplation, deplation, deplation—actio, actio, actio;* relieve the gorged vessels, and don't drown the grand hydraulic machine, the heart—them's my sentiments."

Turning from the speaker with a look of angry impatience, the boy whispered some words in the Corporal's ear.

"What could I do, sir?" was the answer; "it was this fellow or nothing."

"And better, a thousand times better, nothing," said the boy, "than trust his life to the coarse ignorance of this wretched quack." And in his passion the words were uttered loud enough for Billy to overhear them.

"Don't be hasty, your honour," said Billy, submissively, "and don't be unjust. The realms of disaze is like an unknown tract of country, or a country that's only known a little, just round the coast, as it might be; once ye'r beyond that, one man is as good a guide as another, *cæteris paribus,* that is, with 'equal lights.'"

"What have you done? Have you given him anything?" broke in the boy, hurriedly.

"I took a bleeding from him, little short of sixteen ounces, from the temporial," said Billy, proudly, "and I'll give him now a concoction of meadow saffron with a pinch of saltpetre in it, to cause diaphoresis, dy'e mind? Meanwhile, we're disgorging the arachnoid membranes with cowld applications, and we're relievin' the cerebellum by repose. I challenge the Hall," added Billy, stoutly, "to say isn't them the grand principles of 'traitment.' Ah! young gentleman," said he, after a few seconds' pause, "don't be hard on me, because I'm poor and in rags, nor think manely of me because I spake with a brogue, and maybe bad grammar, for you see, even a crayture of my kind can have a knowledge of disaze, just as he may have a knowledge of nature, by observation. What is sickness, after all, but just one of the phenomenons of all organic and inorganic matter—a regular sort of shindy in a man's inside, like a thunderstorm, or a hurry-cane outside? Watch what's coming, look out and see which way the mischief is brewin', and make your preparations. That's the great study of physic."

The boy listened patiently and even attentively to this speech, and when Billy had concluded, he turned to the Corporal and said, "Look to him, Craggs, and let him have his supper, and when he has eaten it send him to my room."

Billy bowed an acknowledgment, and followed the Corporal to the kitchen.

"That's my lord's son, I suppose," said he, as he seated himself, "and a fine young crayture too—*puer ingenuus*, with a grand frontal development." And with this reflection he addressed himself to the coarse but abundant fare which Craggs placed before him, and with an appetite that showed how much he relished it.

"This is elegant living ye have here, Mr. Craggs," said Billy, as he drained his tankard of beer, and placed it with a sigh on the table; "many happy years of it to ye—I couldn't wish ye anything better."

"The life is not so bad," said Craggs, "but it's lonely sometimes

"Life need never be lonely so long as a man has health and his faculties," said Billy; "give me nature to admire, a bit of baycon

for dinner, and my fiddle to amuse me, and I wouldn't change with the king of Sugar 'Candy.'"

"I was there," said Craggs, "it's a fine island."

"My lord wants to see the doctor," said a woman, entering hastily.

"And the doctor is ready for him," said Billy, rising and leaving the kitchen with all the dignity he could assume.

CHAPTER III.

BILLY TRAYNOR—POET, PEDLAR, AND PHYSICIAN.

"DIDN'T I tell you how it would be?" said Billy, as he re-entered the kitchen, now crowded by the workpeople, anxious for tidings of the sick man. "The head is relieved, the con-jestive symptoms is allayed, and when the artarial excitement subsides, he'll be out of danger."

"Musha but I'm glad," muttered one; "he'd be a great loss to us."

"True for you, Patsey; there's eight or nine of us here would miss him if he was gone."

"Troth he doesn't give much employment, but we couldn't spare him," croaked out a third, when the entrance of the Corporal cut short further commentary; and the

party now gathered around the cheerful turf fire, with that instinctive sense of comfort impressed by the swooping wind and rain that beat against the windows.

"It's a dreadful night outside; I wouldn't like to cross the lough in it," said one.

"Then that's just what I'm thinking of this minit," said Billy. "I'll have to be up at the office for the bags at six o'clock."

"Faix you'll not see Leenane at six o'clock to-morrow."

"Sorra taste of it," muttered another; "there's a sea runnin' outside now that would swamp a life-boat."

"I'll not lose an illigant situation of six pounds ten a year, and a pair of shoes at Christmas, for want of a bit of courage," said Billy; "I'd have my dismissal if I wasn't there, as sure as my name is Billy Traynor."

"And better for you than lose your life, Billy," said one.

"And it's not alone myself I'd be thinking of," said Billy; "but every man in this world, high and low, has his duties. *My* duty," added he, somewhat pretentiously, "is to carry the King's mail; and if anything was to obstruckt, or impade, or delay the

correspondience, it's on me the blame would lie."

"The letters wouldn't go the faster because you were drowned," broke in the Corporal.

"No, sir," said Billy, rather staggered by the grin of approval that met this remark —"no, sir, what you obsarve is true; but nobody reflects on the sintry that dies at his post."

"If you must and will go, I'll give you the yawl," said Craggs; "and I'll go with you myself."

"Spoke like a British Grenadier," cried Billy, with enthusiasm.

"Carbineer, if the same to you, master," said the other, quietly; "I never served in the infantry."

"*Tros Tyriusve mihi*," cried Billy; "which is as much as to say,

"'To storm the skies, or lay siege to the moon,
Give me one of the line, or a heavy dragoon,'

it's the same to me, as the poet says."

And a low murmur of the company seemed to accord approval to the sentiment.

"I wish you'd give us a tune, Billy," said one, coaxingly.

of ale, boys, and we'll drink to the master's speedy recovery."

It was a rare occasion when the Corporal suffered himself to expand in this fashion, and great was the applause at the unexpected munificence.

Billy at the same moment took out his fiddle, and began that process of preparatory screwing and scraping which, no matter how distressing to the surrounders, seems to afford intense delight to performers on this instrument. In the present case, it is but fair to say, there was neither comment nor impatience; on the contrary, they seemed to accept these convulsive throes of sound as an earnest of the grand flood of melody that was coming. That Billy was occupied with other thoughts than those of tuning was, however, apparent, for his lips continued to move rapidly; and at moments he was seen to beat time with his foot, as though measuring out the rhythm of a verse.

"I have it now, ladies and gentlemen," he said, making a low obeisance to the company; and so saying, he struck up a very popular tune, the same to which a reverend divine wrote his words of "The Night before

an inn, and order whatever you wanted. I don't need to be a king, to sit on a throne; I don't want ships, nor coaches, nor horses, to convay me to foreign lands. I can bestow kingdoms. When I haven't tuppence to buy tobacco, and without a shoe to my foot, and my hair through my hat, I can be dancin' wid princesses, and handin' empresses in to tay."

"Musha, musha!" muttered the surrounders, as though they were listening to a magician, who in a moment of unguarded familiarity condescended to discuss his own miraculous gifts.

"And," resumed Billy, "it isn't only what ye are to yourself and your own heart, but what ye are to others, that without that sacret bond between you, wouldn't think of you at all. I remember, once on a time, I was in the north of England travelling, partly for pleasure, and partly with a view to a small speculation in Sheffield ware—cheap penknives and scissors, pencil-cases, bodkins, and the like—and I wandered about for weeks through what they call the Lake Country, a very handsome place, but nowise grand or sublime, like what we have

here in Ireland—more wood, forest timber, and better-off people, but nothing beyond that!

"Well, one evening—it was in August—I came down by a narrow path to the side of a lake, where there was a stone seat, put up to see the view from, and in front was three wooden steps of stairs going down into the water, where a boat might come in. It was a lovely spot, and well chosen, for you could count as many as five promontaries running out into the lake; and there was two islands, all wooded to the water's edge; and behind all, in the distance, was a great mountain, with clouds on the top; and it was just the season when the trees is beginnin' to change their colours, and there was shades of deep gold, and dark olive, and russet brown, all mingling together with the green, and glowing in the lake below under the setting sun, and all was quiet and still as midnight; and over the water the only ripple was the track of a water-hen, as she scudded past between the islands; and if ever there was peace and tranquillity in the world it was just there! Well, I put down my pack in the leaves, for I didn't like to see or think

"Before I knew where I was, the boat glided in to the steps, and a tall man, a little stooped in the shoulders, stood before me.

"'Is it you,' said he, with a quiet laugh, 'that accuses Pope of a bull?'

"'It is,' says I; 'and what's more, there isn't a poet from Horace downwards that I won't show bulls in; there's bulls in Shakspeare and in Milton; there's bulls in the ancients; I'll point out a bull in Aristophanes.'

"'What have we here?' said he, turning to the others.

"'A poor crayture,' says I, 'like Goldsmith's chest of drawers,

"'With brains reduced a double debt to pay,
To dream by night, sell Sheffield ware by day.'

"Well, with that he took a fit of laughing, and handing the rest out of the boat, he made me come along at his side, discoorsin' me about my thravels, and all I seen, and all I read, till we reached an elegant little cottage on a bank right over the lake; and then he brought me in and made me take

tay with the family; and I spent the night there; and when I started the next morning there wasn't a 'screed' of my pack that they didn't buy, penknives, and whistles, and nut-crackers, and all, just, as they said, for keepsakes. Good luck to them, and happy hearts, wherever they are, for they made mine happy that day; ay, and for many an hour afterwards, when I just think over their kind words and pleasant faces."

More than one of the company had dropped off asleep during Billy's narrative, and of the others, their complaisance as listeners appeared taxed to the utmost, while the Corporal snored loudly, like a man who had a right to indulge himself to the fullest extent.

"There's the bell again," muttered one, "that's from the 'lord's room;'" and Craggs, starting up by the instinct of his office, hastened off to his master's chamber.

"My lord says you are to remain here," said he, as he re-entered a few minutes later; "he is satisfied with your skill, and I'm to send off a messenger to the post, to let them know he has detained you."

"I'm obaydient," said Billy, with a low

bow; "and now for a brief repose!" And so saying, he drew a long woollen nightcap from his pocket, and putting it over his eyes, resigned himself to sleep with the practised air of one who needed but very little preparation to secure slumber.

CHAPTER IV.

A VISITOR.

THE old castle of Glencore contained but one spacious room, and this served all the purposes of drawing-room, dining-room, and library. It was a long and lofty chamber, with a raftered ceiling, from which a heavy chandelier hung by a massive chain of iron. Six windows, all in the same wall, deeply set and narrow, admitted a sparing light. In the opposite wall stood two fireplaces, large, massive, and monumental; the carved supporters of the richly-chased pediment being of colossal size, and the great shield of the house crowning the pyramid of strange and uncouth objects that were grouped below. The walls were partly occupied by bookshelves, partly covered by wainscot, and here and there displayed a worn-out portrait of

some bygone warrior or dame, who little dreamed how much the colour of their effigies should be indebted to the sad effects of damp and mildew. The furniture consisted of every imaginable type, from the carved oak and ebony console, to the white and gold of Versailles taste, and the modern compromise of comfort with ugliness which chintz and soft cushions accomplish. Two great screens, thickly covered with prints and drawings, most of them political caricatures of some fifty years back, flanked each fireplace, making as it were, in this case, two different apartments.

At one of those, on a low sofa, sat, or rather lay, Lord Glencore, pale and wasted by long illness. His thin hand held a letter, to shade his eyes from the blazing wood fire, and the other hand hung listlessly at his side. The expression of the sick man's face was that of deep melancholy—not the mere gloom of recent suffering, but the deep-cut traces of a long-carried affliction, a sorrow which had eaten into his very heart, and made its home there.

At the second fireplace sat his son, and, though a mere boy, the lineaments of his

father marked the youth's face with a painful exactness. The same intensity was in the eyes—the same haughty character sat on the brow; and there was in the whole countenance the most extraordinary counterpart of the gloomy seriousness of the older face. He had been reading, but the fast-falling night obliged him to desist, and he sat now contemplating the bright embers of the wood fire in dreamy thought. Once or twice was he disturbed from his reverie by the whispered voice of an old serving man, asking for something with that submissive manner assumed by those who are continually exposed to the outbreaks of another's temper; and at last the boy, who had hitherto scarcely deigned to notice the appeals to him, flung a bunch of keys contemptuously on the ground, with a muttered malediction on his tormentor.

"What's that?" cried out the sick man, startled at the sound.

"'Tis nothing, my lord, but the keys that fell out of my hand," replied the old man, humbly. "Mr. Craggs is away to Leenane, and I was going to get out the wine for dinner."

"Where's Mr. Charles?" asked Lord Glencore.

"He's there beyant," muttered the other, in a low voice, while he pointed towards the distant fireplace; "but he looks tired and weary, and I didn't like to disturb him."

"Tired! weary!—with what?—where has he been?—what has he been doing?" cried he, hastily. "Charles, Charles, I say!"

And slowly rising from his seat, and with an air of languid indifference, the boy came towards him.

Lord Glencore's face darkened as he gazed on him.

"Where have you been?" asked he, sternly.

"Yonder," said the boy, in an accent like the echo of his own.

"There's Mr. Craggs, now, my lord," said the old butler, as he looked out of the window, and eagerly seized the opportunity to interrupt the scene; "there he is, and a gentleman with him."

"Ha! go and meet him, Charles—it's Harcourt. Go and receive him, show him his room, and then bring him here to me."

The boy heard without a word, and left

the room with the same slow step and the same look of apathy. Just as he reached the hall the stranger was entering it. He was a tall, well-built man, with the mingled ease and stiffness of a soldier in his bearing; his face was handsome, but somewhat stern, and his voice had that tone which implies the long habit of command.

"You're a Massy, that I'll swear to," said he, frankly, as he shook the boy's hand; "the family face in every lineament. And how is your father?"

"Better; he has had a severe illness."

"So his letter told me. I was up the Rhine when I received it, and started at once for Ireland."

"He has been very impatient for your coming," said the boy; "he has talked of nothing else."

"Ay, we are old friends. Glencore and I have been schoolfellows, chums at college, and messmates in the same regiment," said he, with a slight touch of sorrow in his tone. "Will he be able to see me now? Is he confined to bed?"

"No, he will dine with you. I'm to show you your room, and then bring you to him."

"That's better news than I hoped for, boy. By the way, what's your name?"

"Charles Conyngham."

"To be sure, Charles; how could I have forgotten it! So, Charles, this is to be my quarters; and a glorious view there is from this window. What's the mountain yonder?"

"Ben Creggan."

"We must climb that summit some of those days, Charley. I hope you're a good walker. You shall be my guide through this wild region here, for I have a passion for explorings."

And he talked away rapidly, while he made a brief toilet, and refreshed him from the fatigues of the road.

"Now, Charley, I'm at your orders; let us descend to the drawing-room."

"You'll find my father there," said the boy, as he stopped short at the door; and Harcourt, staring at him for a second or two in silence, turned the handle and entered.

Lord Glencore never turned his head as the other drew nigh, but sat with his forehead resting on the table, extending his hand only in welcome.

"My poor fellow!" said Harcourt, grasping the thin and wasted fingers,—"my poor fellow, how glad I am to be with you again." And he seated himself at his side as he spoke. "You had a relapse after you wrote to me?"

Glencore slowly raised his head, and, pushing back a small velvet skull-cap that he wore, said:

"You'd not have known me, George. Eh? see how grey I am! I saw myself in the glass to-day for the first time, and I really couldn't believe my eyes."

"In another week the change will be just as great the other way. It was some kind of a fever, was it not?"

"I believe so," said the other, sighing.

"And they bled you and blistered you, of course. These fellows are like the farriers —they have but the one system for everything. Who was your torturer?—where did you get him from?"

"A practitioner of the neighbourhood, the wild growth of the mountain," said Glencore, with a sickly smile; "but I mustn't be ungrateful; he saved my life, if that be a cause for gratitude."

"And a right good one, I take it. How like you that boy is, Glencore. I started back when he met me. It was just as if I was transported again to old school-days, and had seen yourself as you used to be long ago! Do you remember the long meadow, Glencore?"

"Harcourt," said he, falteringly, "don't talk to me of long ago, at least not now." And then, as if thinking aloud, added, "How strange that a man without a hope should like the future better than the past."

"How old is Charley?" asked Harcourt, anxious to engage him on some other theme.

"He'll be fifteen, I think, his next birth-day; he seems older, doesn't he?"

"Yes, the boy is well grown and athletic. What has he been doing?—have you had him at a school?"

"At a school!" said Glencore, starting; "no, he has lived always here with myself. I have been his tutor—I read with him every day, till that illness seized me."

"He looks clever; is he so?"

"Like the rest of us, George, he may learn, but he can't be taught. The old ob-

stinacy of the race is strong in him, and to rouse him to rebel all you have to do is to give him a task; but his faculties are good, his apprehension quick, and his memory, if he would but tax it, excellent. Here's Craggs come to tell us of dinner; give me your arm, George, we haven't far to go—this one room serves us for everything."

"You're better lodged than I expected—your letters told me to look for a mere barrack; and the place stands so well."

"Yes, the spot was well chosen, although I suppose its founders cared little enough about the picturesque."

The dinner-table was spread behind one of the massive screens, and under the careful direction of Craggs and old Simon, was well and amply supplied—fish and game, the delicacies of other localities, being here in abundance. Harcourt had a traveller's appetite, and enjoyed himself thoroughly, while Glencore never touched a morsel, and the boy eat sparingly, watching the stranger with that intense curiosity which comes of living estranged from all society.

"Charley will treat you to a bottle of Bur-

gundy, Harcourt," said Glencore, as they drew round the fire; "he keeps the cellar key."

"Let us have two, Charley," said Harcourt, as the boy arose to leave the room, "and take care that you carry them steadily."

The boy stood for a second and looked at his father, as if interrogating, and then a sudden flush suffused his face as Glencore made a gesture with his hand for him to go.

"You don't perceive how you touched him to the quick there, Harcourt? You talked to him as to how he should carry the wine; he thought that office menial and beneath him, and he looked at me to know what he should do."

"What a fool you have made of the boy," said Harcourt, bluntly. "By Jove! it was time I should come here!"

When the boy came back he was followed by the old butler, carefully carrying in a small wicker contrivance, *Hibernice* called a cooper, three cobwebbed and well-crusted bottles.

"Now, Charley," said Harcourt, gaily, "if you want to see a man thoroughly happy,

just step up to my room and fetch me a small leather sack you'll find there of tobacco, and on the dressing-table you'll see my meerschaum-pipe; be cautious with it, for it belonged to no less a man than Poniatowski, the poor fellow who died at Leipsic."

The lad stood again irresolute and confused, when a signal from his father motioned him away to acquit the errand.

"Thank you," said Harcourt, as he re-entered; "you see I am not vain of my meerschaum without reason. The carving of that bull is a work of real art; and if you were a connoisseur in such matters, you'd say the colour was perfect. Have you given up smoking, Glencore? you used to be fond of a weed."

"I care but little for it," said Glencore, sighing.

"Take to it again, my dear fellow, if only that it is a bond 'tween yourself and every one who whiffs his cloud. There are wonderfully few habits—I was going to say enjoyments, and I might say so, but I'll call them habits—that consort so well with every condition and every circumstance of life, that become the prince and the peasant, suit the

garden of the palace, and the red watch-fire of the bivouac, relieve the weary hours of a calm at sea, or refresh the tired hunter in the prairies."

"You must tell Charley some of your adventures in the West.—The Colonel has passed two years in the Rocky Mountains," said Glencore to his son.

"Ay, Charley, I have knocked about the world as much as most men, and seen, too, my share of its wonders. If accidents by sea and land can interest you, if you care for stories of Indian life and the wild habits of a prairie hunter, I'm your man. Your father can tell you more of salons and the great world, of what may be termed the high game of life——"

"I have forgotten it, as much as if I had never seen it," said Glencore, interrupting, and with a severity of voice that showed the theme displeased him. And now a pause ensued, painful perhaps to the others, but scarcely felt by Harcourt, as he smoked away peacefully, and seemed lost in the windings of his own fancies.

"Have you shooting here, Glencore?" asked he, at length.

"There might be, if I were to preserve the game."

"And you do not. Do you fish?"

"No; never."

"You give yourself up to farming, then?"

"Not even that; the truth is, Harcourt, I literally do nothing. A few newspapers, a stray review or so reach me in these solitudes, and keep me, in a measure, informed as to the course of events; but Charley and I con over our classics together, and scrawl sheets of paper with algebraic signs, and puzzle our heads over strange formulas, wonderfully indifferent to what the world is doing at the other side of this little estuary."

"You of all men living to lead such a life as this! a fellow that never could cram occupation enough into his short twenty-four hours," broke in Harcourt.

Glencore's pale cheek flushed slightly, and an impatient movement of his fingers on the table showed how ill he relished any allusion to his own former life.

"Charley will show you to-morrow all the wonders of our erudition, Harcourt," said he, changing the subject; "we have got to think ourselves very learned, and I hope

you'll be polite enough not to undeceive us."

"You'll have a merciful critic, Charley," said the Colonel, laughing, "for more reasons than one. Had the question been how to track a wolf, or wind an antelope, to outmanœuvre a scout party, or harpoon a calf-whale, I'd not yield to many, but if you throw me amongst Greek roots, or double equations, I'm only Sampson, with his hair *en crop !*"

The solemn clock over the mantelpiece struck ten, and the boy arose as it ceased.

"That's Charley's bedtime," said Glencore, "and we are determined to make no stranger of you, George. He'll say good night."

And with a manner of mingled shyness and pride the boy held out his hand, which the soldier shook cordially, saying,

"To-morrow, then, Charley, I count upon you for my day, and so that it be not to be passed in the library I'll acquit myself creditably."

"I like your boy, Glencore," said he, as soon as they were alone. "Of course I have seen very little of him; and if I had seen

more I should be but a sorry judge of what people would call his abilities; but he is a good stamp; 'Gentleman' is written on him in a hand that any can read; and, by Jove! let them talk as they will, but that's half the battle of life!"

"He is a strange fellow; you'll not understand him in a moment," said Glencore, smiling half sadly to himself.

"Not understand him, Glencore? I read him like print, man; you think that his shy, bashful manner imposes upon me; not a bit of it; I see the fellow is as proud as Lucifer. All your solitude and estrangement from the world haven't driven out of his head that he's to be a Viscount one of these days; and, somehow, wherever he has picked it up, he has got a very pretty notion of the importance and rank that same title confers."

"Let us not speak of this now, Harcourt; I'm far to weak to enter upon what it would lead to. It is, however, the great reason for which I entreated you to come here. And to-morrow—at all events in a day or two—we can speak of it fully. And now I must leave you. You'll have to rough it here, George; but as there is no man can do so

with a better grace, I can spare my apologies; only, I beg, don't let the place be worse than it need be. Give your orders; get what you can; and see if your tact and knowledge of life cannot remedy many a difficulty which our ignorance or apathy have served to perpetuate."

"I'll take the command of the garrison with pleasure," said Harcourt, filling up his glass, and replenishing the fire. "And now a good night's rest to you, for I half suspect I have already jeopardied some of it."

The old campaigner sat till long past midnight. The generous wine, his pipe, the cheerful wood fire, were all companionable enough, and well suited thoughts which took no high or heroic range, but were chiefly reveries of the past, some sad, some pleasant, but all tinged with the one philosophy, which made him regard the world as a campaign, wherein he who grumbles or repines is but a sorry soldier, and unworthy of his cloth.

It was not till the last glass was drained that he arose to seek his bed, and pleasantly humming some old air to himself, he slowly mounted the stairs to his chamber.

CHAPTER V.

COLONEL HARCOURT'S LETTER.

As we desire throughout this tale to make the actors themselves, wherever it be possible, the narrators, using their words in preference to our own, we shall now place before the reader a letter written by Colonel Harcourt about a week after his arrival at Glencore, which will at least serve to rescue him and ourselves from the task of repetition.

It was addressed to Sir Horace Upton, Her Majesty's Envoy at Stuttgard, one who had formerly served in the same regiment with Glencore and himself, but who left the army early, to follow the career of diplomacy, wherein, still a young man, he had risen to the rank of a minister. It is not important, at this moment, to speak more

particularly of his character, than that it was in almost every respect the opposite of his correspondent's. Where the one was frank, open, and unguarded, the other was cold, cautious, and reserved; where one believed, the other doubted; where one was hopeful, the other had nothing but misgivings. Harcourt would have twenty times a day wounded the feelings, or jarred against the susceptibility of his best friend; Upton could not be brought to trench upon the slightest prejudice of his greatest enemy. We might continue this contrast to every detail of their characters, but enough has now been said, and we proceed to the letter in question:

"Glencore Castle.

"DEAR UPTON,—True to my promise to give you early tidings of our old friend, I sit down to pen a few lines, which if a rickety table and some infernal lampblack for ink should make illegible, you'll have to wait for the elucidation till my arrival. I found Glencore terribly altered; I'd not have known him. He used to be muscular and rather full in habit; he is now a mere skele-

ton. His hair and moustache were coal black; they are a motley grey. He was straight as an arrow—pretentiously erect, many thought; he is stooped now, and bent nearly double. His voice, too, the most clear and ringing in the squadron, is become a hoarse whisper. You remember what a passion he had for dress, and how heartily we all deplored the chance of his being colonel, well knowing what precious caprices of costly costume would be the consequence; well, a discharged corporal, in a cast-off mufti, is stylish compared to him. I don't think he has a hat—I have only seen an oilskin cap; but his coat, his one coat, is a curiosity of industrious patchwork; and his trousers are a pair of our old overalls, the same pattern we wore at Hounslow when the king reviewed us.

"Great as these changes are, they are nothing to the alteration in the poor fellow's disposition. He that was generous to munificence, is now an absolute miser, descending to the most pitiful economy, and moaning over every trifling outlay. He is irritable, too, to a degree. Far from the jolly, light-hearted comrade, ready to join in the laugh

against himself, and enjoy a jest of which he was the object, he suspects a slight in every allusion, and bristles up to resent a mere familiarity, as though it were an insult.

"Of course I put much of this down to the score of illness, and of bad health before he was so ill; but, depend upon it, he's not the man we knew him. Heaven knows if he ever will be so again. The night I arrived here he was more natural—more like himself, in fact, than he has ever been since. His manner was heartier, and in his welcome there was a touch of the old jovial good fellow, who never was so happy as when sharing his quarters with a comrade. Since that he has grown punctilious, anxiously asking me if I am comfortable, and teazing me with apologies for what I don't miss, and excuses about things that I should never have discovered wanting.

"I think I see what is passing within him; he wants to be confidential, and he doesn't know how to go about it. I suppose he looks on me as rather a rough father to confess to; he isn't quite sure what kind of sympathy, if any, he'll meet with from me, and he more than half dreads a certain care-

less, outspoken way in which I have now and then addressed his boy, of whom more anon.

"I may be right, or I may be wrong, in this conjecture; but certain it is, that nothing like confidential conversation has yet passed between us, and each day seems to render the prospect of such only less and less likely. I wish from my heart you were here; you are just the fellow to suit him—just calculated to nourish the susceptibilities that *I* only shock. I said as much t'other day, in a half-careless way, and he immediately caught it up, and said—'Ay, George, Upton is a man one wants now and then in life, and when the moment comes, there is no such thing as a substitute for him.' In a joking manner, I then remarked, 'Why not come over to see him?' 'Leave this!' cried he; 'venture in the world again; expose myself to its brutal insolence, or still more brutal pity!' In a torrent of passion, he went on in this strain, till I heartily regretted that I had ever touched this unlucky topic.

"I date his greatest reserve from that same moment; and I am sure he is disposed to

connect me with the casual suggestion to go over to Stuttgard, and deems me, in consequence, one utterly deficient in all true feeling and delicacy.

"I needn't tell you that my stay here is the reverse of a pleasure. I'm never, what fine people call, bored anywhere; and I could amuse myself gloriously in this queer spot. I have shot some half-dozen seals, hooked the heaviest salmon I ever saw rise to a fly, and have had rare coursing, not to say that Glencore's table, with certain reforms I have introduced, is very tolerable, and his cellar unimpeachable. I'll back his chambertin against your Excellency's; and I have discovered a bin of red hermitage that would convert a whole vineyard of the smallest Lafitte into Sneyd's claret; but with all these seductions, I can't stand the life of continued restraint I'm reduced to. Glencore evidently sent for me to make some revelations, which, now that he sees me, he cannot accomplish. For aught I know, there may be as many changes in *me* to *his* eyes, as to *mine* there are in *him*. I only can vouch for it, that if I ride three stone heavier, I haven't the worse place, and I don't detect

any striking falling off in my appreciation of good fare and good fellows.

"I spoke of the boy; he is a fine lad—somewhat haughty, perhaps; a little spoiled by the country people calling him the young lord; but a generous fellow, and very like Glencore, when he first joined us at Canterbury. By way of educating him himself, Glencore has been driving Virgil and decimal fractions into him; and the boy, bred in the country—never out of it for a day—can't load a gun or tie a hackle. Not the worst thing about the lad is his inordinate love for Glencore, whom he imagines to be about the greatest and most gifted being that ever lived. I can scarcely help smiling at the implicitness of this honest faith; but I take good care not to smile; on the contrary, I give every possible encouragement to the belief. I conclude the disenchantment will arrive only too early at last.

"You'll not know what to make of such a lengthy epistle from me, and you'll doubtless torture that fine diplomatic intelligence of yours to detect the secret motive of my long-windedness; but the simple fact is, it has rained incessantly for the last three days,

and promises the same cheering weather for as many more. Glencore doesn't fancy that the boy's lessons should be broken in upon —and *hinc istæ litteræ*—that's classical for you.

"I wish I could say when I am likely to beat my retreat. I'd stay—not very willingly, perhaps, but still I'd stay — if I thought myself of any use; but I cannot persuade myself that I am such. Glencore is now about, again, feeble of course, and much pulled down, but able to go about the house and the garden. I can contribute nothing to his recovery, and I fear as little to his comfort. I even doubt if he desires me to prolong my visit; but such is my fear of offending him, that I actually dread to allude to my departure, till I can sound my way as to how he'll take it. This fact alone will show you how much he is changed from the Glencore of long ago. Another feature in him, totally unlike his former self, struck me the other evening. We were talking of old messmates—Croydon, Stanhope, Loftus, and yourself—and instead of dwelling, as he once would have done, exclusively on your traits of character and dis-

position, he discussed nothing but your abilities, and the capacity by which you could win your way to honours and distinction. I needn't say how, in such a valuation, you came off best. Indeed he professes the highest esteem for your talents, and says, 'You'll see Upton either a cabinet minister or ambassador at Paris yet;' and this he repeated in the same words last night, as if to show it was not dropped as a mere random observation.

"I have some scruples about venturing to offer anything bordering on a suggestion to a great and wily diplomatist like yourself; but if an illustrious framer of treaties and protocols would condescend to take a hint from an old dragoon colonel, I'd say that a few lines from your crafty pen might possibly unlock this poor fellow's heart, and lead him to unburthen to *you* what he evidently cannot persuade himself to reveal to *me*. I can see plainly enough that there is something on his mind; but I know it just as a stupid old hound feels there is a fox in the cover, but cannot for the life of him see how he's to 'draw' him.

"A letter from you would do him good,

at all events; even the little gossip of your gossiping career would cheer and amuse him. He said, very plaintively, two nights ago, 'They've all forgotten me. When a man retires from the world he begins to die, and the great event, after all, is only the *coup de grace* to a long agony of torture." Do write to him, then; the address is 'Glencore Castle, Leenane, Ireland,' where, I suppose, I shall be still a resident for another fortnight to come.

"Glencore has just sent for me; but I must close this for the post, or it will be too late.

"Yours ever truly,

"GEORGE HARCOURT.

"I open this to say that he sent for me to ask your address—whether through the Foreign Office, or direct to Stuttgard. You'll probably not hear for some days, for he writes with extreme difficulty, and I leave it to your wise discretion to write to him or not in the interval.

"Poor fellow, he looks very ill to-day. He says that he never slept the whole night, and that the laudanum he took to induce

drowsiness, only excited and maddened him. I counselled a hot jorum of mulled porter before getting into bed; but he deemed me a monster for the recommendation, and seemed quite disgusted besides. Couldn't you send him over a despatch? I think such a document from Stuttgard ought to be an unfailing soporific."

CHAPTER VI.

QUEER COMPANIONSHIP.

WHEN Harcourt repaired to Glencore's bedroom, where he still lay, wearied and feverish after a bad night, he was struck by the signs of suffering in the sick man's face. The cheeks were bloodless and fallen in, the lips pinched, and in the eyes there shone that unnatural brilliancy which results from an over-wrought and over-excited brain.

"Sit down here, George," said he, pointing to a chair beside the bed; "I want to talk to you. I thought every day that I could muster courage for what I wish to say; but somehow, when the time arrived, I felt like a criminal who entreats for a few hours more of life, even though it be a life of misery."

"It strikes me that you were never less equal to the effort than now," said Harcourt, laying his hand on the other's pulse.

"Don't believe my pulse, George," said Glencore, smiling faintly. "The machine may work badly, but it has wonderful holding out. I've gone through enough," added he, gloomily, "to kill most men, and here I am still, breathing and suffering."

"This place doesn't suit you, Glencore. There are not above two days in the month you can venture to take the air."

"And where would you have me go, sir?" broke he in, fiercely. "Would you advise Paris and the Boulevards, or a palace in the Piazza di Spagna at Rome? or perhaps the Chiaja at Naples would be public enough? Is it that I may parade disgrace and infamy through Europe, that I should leave this solitude?"

"I want to see you in a better climate, Glencore; in a place where the sun shines occasionally."

"This suits me," said the other, bluntly; "and here I have the security that none can invade—none molest me. But it is not of myself I wish to speak—it is of my boy."

Harcourt made no reply, but sat patiently to listen to what was coming.

"It is time to think of him," added Glencore, slowly. "The other day—it seems but the other day—and he was a mere child; a few years more—to seem when past like a long dreary night—and he will be a man."

"Very true," said Harcourt; "and Charley is one of those fellows who only make one plunge from the boy into all the responsibilities of manhood. Throw him into a college at Oxford, or the mess of a regiment to-morrow, and this day week you'll not know him from the rest."

Glencore was silent; if he had heard, he never noticed Harcourt's remark.

"Has he ever spoken to you about himself, Harcourt?" asked he, after a pause.

"Never, except when I led the subject in that direction; and even then reluctantly, as though it were a topic he would avoid."

"Have you discovered any strong inclination in him for a particular kind of life, or any career in preference to another?"

"None; and if I were only to credit what I see of him, I'd say that this dull monotony,

and this dreary uneventful existence, is what he likes best of all the world."

"You really think so?" cried Glencore, with an eagerness that seemed out of proportion to the remark.

"So far as I see," rejoined Harcourt, guardedly, and not wishing to let his observation carry graver consequences than he might suspect.

"So that you deem him capable of passing a life of a quiet, unambitious tenour—neither seeking for distinctions, nor fretting after honours?"

"How should he know of their existence, Glencore? What has the boy ever heard of life and its struggles? It's not in Homer, or Sallust, he'd learn the strife of parties and public men."

"And why need he ever know them?" broke in Glencore, fiercely.

"If he doesn't know them now, he's sure to be taught them hereafter. A young fellow who will succeed to a title and a good fortune——"

"Stop, Harcourt!" cried Glencore, passionately. "Has anything of this kind ever escaped you in intercourse with the boy?"

"Not a word—not a syllable."

"Has he himself ever, by a hint, or by a chance word, implied that he was aware of——"

Glencore faltered and hesitated, for the word he sought for did not present itself. Harcourt, however, released him from all embarrassment, by saying,

"With me, the boy is rarely anything but a listener; he hears me talk away of tiger-shooting, and buffalo-hunting, scarcely ever interrupting me with a question. But I can see in his manner with the country people, when they salute him, and call him 'my lord'——"

"But he is not 'my lord,'" broke in Glencore.

"Of course he is not; that I am well aware of."

"He never will—never shall be," cried Glencore, in a voice to which a long pent-up passion imparted a terrible energy.

"How!—what do you mean, Glencore?" said Harcourt, eagerly. "Has he any malady?—is there any deadly taint?"

"That there is, by Heaven!" cried the sick man, grasping the curtain with one

hand, while he held the other firmly clenched upon his forehead. "A taint, the deadliest that can stain a human heart! Talk of station, rank, title—what are they, if they are to be coupled with shame, ignominy, and sorrow? The loud voice of the herald calls his father Sixth Viscount of Glencore, but a still louder voice proclaims his mother a——"

With a wild burst of hysteric laughter, he threw himself, face downwards, on the bed; and now scream after scream burst from him, till the room was filled by the servants, in the midst of whom appeared Billy, who had only that same day returned from Leenane, whither he had gone to make a formal resignation of his functions as letter-carrier.

"This is nothing but an '*accessio nervosa*,'" said Billy; "clear the room, ladies and gentlemen, and lave me with the patient." And Harcourt gave the signal for obedience by first taking his departure.

Lord Glencore's attack was more serious than at first it was apprehended, and for three days there was every threat of a relapse of his late fever; but Billy's skill was

once more successful, and on the fourth day he declared that the danger was past. During this period, Harcourt's attention was, for the first time, drawn to the strange creature who officiated as the doctor, and who, in despite of all the detracting influences of his humble garb and mean attire, aspired to be treated with the deference due to a great physician.

"If it's the crown and the sceptre makes the king," said he, "'tis the same with the science that makes the doctor; and no man can be despised when he has a rag of ould Galen's mantle to cover his shoulders."

"So you're going to take blood from him?" asked Harcourt, as he met him on the stairs, where he had awaited his coming one night when it was late.

"No, sir; 'tis more a disturbance of the great nervous centres than any derangement of the heart and arteries," said Billy, pompously; "that's what shows a real doctor, to distinguish between the effects of excitement and inflammation, which is as different as fireworks is from a bombardment."

"Not a bad simile, Master Billy; come in and drink a glass of brandy-and-water with

me," said Harcourt, right glad at the prospect of such companionship.

Billy Traynor, too, was flattered by the invitation, and seated himself at the fire with an air at once proud and submissive.

"You've a difficult patient to treat there," said Harcourt, when he had furnished his companion with a pipe, and twice filled his glass; "he's hard to manage, I take it?"

"Yer' right," said Billy; "every touch is a blow, every breath of air is a hurricane with him. There's no such thing as tratin' a man of that timperament; it's the same with many of them ould families as with our racehorses, they breed them too fine."

"Egad, I think you are right," said Harcourt, pleased with an illustration that suited his own modes of thinking.

"Yes, sir," said Billy, gaining confidence by the approval; "a man is a mā-chine, and all the parts ought to be balanced, and, as the ancients say, *in equilibrio*. If you give a pre-ponderance here or there, whether it be brain or spinal marrow, cardiac functions or digestive ones, you disthroy him, and make that dangerous kind of constitution that, like a horse with a hard mouth, or a

boat with a weather helm, always runs to one side."

"That's well put, well explained," said Harcourt, who really thought the illustration appropriate.

"Now my lord there," continued Billy, "is all out of balance, every bit of him. Bleed him, and he sinks; stimulate him, and he goes ragin' mad. 'Tis their physical conformation makes their character; and to know how to cure them in sickness, one ought to have some knowledge of them in health."

"How came you to know all this? You are a very remarkable fellow, Billy."

"I am, sir; I'm a phenumenon in a small way. And many people thinks, when they see and convarse with me, what a pity it is I hav'n't the advantages of edication and instruction, and that's just where they're wrong —complately wrong."

"Well, I confess I don't perceive that."

"I'll show you, then. There's a kind of janius natural to men like myself, in Ireland I mean, for I never heerd of it elsewhere. That's just like our Irish emerald or Irish

diamond, wonderful if one considers where you find it—astonishin' if you only think how azy it is to get, but a regular disappointment, a downright take-in, if you intend to have it cut, and polished, and set. No, sir; with all the care and culture in life, you'll never make a precious stone of it!"

"You've not taken the right way to convince me, by using such an illustration, Billy."

"I'll try another, then," said Billy. "We are like Willy-the-Whisps, showing plenty of light where there's no road to travel, but of no manner of use on the highway, or in the dark streets of a village where one has business."

"Your own services here are the refutation to your argument, Billy," said Harcourt, filling his glass.

"'Tis your kindness to say so, sir," said Billy, with gratified pride: "but the sacrat was, he thrusted me—that was the whole of it. All the miracles of physic is confidence, just as all the magic of eloquence is conviction."

"You have reflected profoundly, I see," said Harcourt.

"I made a great many observations at one time of my life—the opportunity was favourable."

"When and how was that?"

"I travelled with a baste caravan for two years, sir; and there's nothing taches one to know mankind like the study of bastes!"

"Not complimentary to humanity, certainly," said Harcourt, laughing.

"Yes, but it is, though; for it is by a con-sideration of the *ferœ naturœ* that you get at the raal nature of mere animal existence. You see there man in the rough, as a body might say, just as he was turned out of the first workshop, and before he was infiltrated with the *divinus afflatus*, the ethereal essence, that makes him the first of creation. There's all the qualities good and bad—love, hate, vengeance, gratitude, grief, joy, ay, and mirth—there they are in the brutes; but they're in no subjection, except by fear. Now it's out of man's motives his character is moulded, and fear is only one amongst them. D'ye apprehend me?"

"Perfectly; fill your pipe." And he pushed the tobacco towards him.

"I will; and I'll drink the memory of the

great and good man that first intro-duced the weed amongst us—Here's Sir Walter Raleigh. By the same token, I was in his house last week."

"In his house! where?"

"Down at Greyhall. You Englishmen, savin' your presence, always forget that many of your celebrities lived years in Ireland. For it was the same long ago as now—a place of decent banishment for men of janius —a kind of straw-yard where ye turned out your intellectual hunters till the sayson came on at home."

"I'm sorry to see, Billy, that, with all your enlightenment, you have the vulgar prejudice against the Saxon."

"And that's the rayson I have it, because it is vulgar," said Billy, eagerly. "Vulgar means popular, common to many; and what's the best test of truth in anything but universal belief, or whatever comes nearest to it. I wish I was in Parliament—I just wish I was there the first night one of the nobs calls out 'That's vulgar;' and I'd just say to him, 'Is there anything as vulgar as men and women? Show me one good thing in life that isn't vulgar! Show me an object a

painter copies, or a poet describes, that isn't so!' Ayeh," cried he, impatiently, "when they wanted a hard word to fling at us, why didn't they take the right one?"

"But you are unjust, Billy; the ungenerous tone you speak of is fast disappearing. Gentlemen, now-a-days, use no disparaging epithets to men poorer or less happily circumstanced than themselves."

"Faix," said Billy, "it isn't sitting here, at the same table with yourself, that I ought to gainsay that remark."

And Harcourt was so struck by the air of good breeding in which he spoke, that he grasped his hand, and shook it warmly.

"And what is more," continued Billy, "from this day out I'll never think so."

He drank off his glass as he spoke, giving to the libation all the ceremony of a solemn vow.

"D'ye hear that?—them's oars; there's a boat coming in."

"You have sharp hearing, master," said Harcourt, laughing.

"I got the gift when I was a smuggler," replied he. "I could put my ear to the ground of a still night, and tell you the

tramp of a revenue boot as well as if I seen it. And now I'll lay sixpence it's Pat Morissy is at the bow-oar there; he rows with a short jerking stroke there's no timing. That's himself, and it must be something urgent from the post-office that brings him over the lough to-night."

The words were scarcely spoken when Craggs entered with a letter in his hand.

"This is for you, Colonel," said he; "it was marked 'immediate,' and the post-mistress despatched it by an express."

The letter was a very brief one; but, in honour to the writer, we shall give it a chapter to itself.

motives, one-half of his temperament was the antidote to the other. Fastidious to a painful extent in matters of taste, he was simplicity itself in all the requirements of his life, and with all a courtier's love of great people, not only tolerating, but actually preferring the society of men beneath him. In person he was tall, and with that air of distinction in his manner that belongs only to those who unite natural graces with long habits of high society. His features were finely formed, and would have been strikingly handsome, were the expression not spoiled by a look of astuteness—a something that implied a tendency to overreach—which marred their repose and injured their uniformity. Not that his manner ever betrayed this weakness; far from it—his was a most polished courtesy. It was impossible to conceive an address more bland or more conciliating. His very gestures, his voice, languid by a slight habit of indisposition, seemed as though exerted above their strength in the desire to please, and making the object of his attentions to feel himself the mark of peculiar honour. There ran through all his nature, through everything

he did, or said, or thought, a certain haughty humility, which served, while it assigned an humble place to himself, to mark out one still more humble for those about him. There were not many things he could not do; indeed he had actually done most of those which win honour and distinction in life. He had achieved a very gallant but brief military career in India, made a most brilliant opening in Parliament, where his abilities at once marked him out for office, was suspected to be the writer of the cleverest political satire, and more than suspected to be the author of "the novel" of the day. With all this, he had great social success. He was deep enough for a ministerial dinner, and "fast" enough for a party of young Guardsmen at Greenwich. With women, too, he was especially a favourite; there was a Machiavelian subtlety which he could throw into small things—a mode of making the veriest trifles little Chinese puzzles of ingenuity that flattered and amused them. In a word, he had great adaptiveness, and it was a quality he indulged less for the gratification of others than for the pleasure it afforded himself.

He had mixed largely in society, not only of his own, but of every country of Europe. He knew every chord of that complex instrument which people call the world, like a master; and although a certain jaded and wearied look, a tone of exhaustion and fatigue, seemed to say that he was tired of it all, that he had found it barren and worthless, the real truth was, he enjoyed life to the full as much as on the first day in which he entered it; and for this simple reason, that he had started with an humble opinion of mankind, their hopes, fears, and ambitions, and so he continued, not disappointed, to the end.

The most governing notion of his whole life was an impression that he had a disease of the chest, some subtle and mysterious affection which had defied the doctors, and would go on to defy them to the last. He had been dangerously wounded in the Burmese war, and attributed the origin of his malady to this cause. Others there were who said that the want of recognition to his services in that campaign was the direst of all the injuries he had received. And true it was, a most brilliant career had met

with neither honours nor advancement, and Upton left the service in disgust, carrying away with him only the lingering sufferings of his wound. To suggest to him that his malady had any affinity to any known affection was to outrage him, since the mere supposition would reduce him to a species of equality with some one else—a thought infinitely worse than any mere physical suffering; and, indeed, to avoid this shocking possibility, he vacillated as to the locality of his disorder, making it now in the lung, now in the heart—at one time in the bronchial tubes, at another in the valves of the aorta. It was his pleasure to consult for this complaint every great physician of Europe, and not alone consult, but commit himself to their direction, and this with a credulity which he could scarcely have summoned in any other cause.

It was difficult to say how far he himself believed in this disorder—the pressure of any momentous event, the necessity of action, never finding him unequal to any effort, no matter how onerous. Give him a difficulty—a minister to outwit, a secret scheme to unravel, a false move to profit by—

and he rose above all his pulmonary symptoms, and could exert himself with a degree of power and perseverance that very few men could equal, none surpass. Indeed it seemed as though he kept this malady for the pastime of idle hours, as other men do a novel or a newspaper, but would never permit it to interfere with the graver business of life.

We have, perhaps, been prolix in our description, but we have felt it the more requisite to be thus diffuse, since the studious simplicity which marked all his manner might have deceived our reader, and which the impression of his mere words have failed to convey.

"You will be glad to hear Upton is in England, Glencore," said Harcourt, as the sick man was assisted to his seat in the library, "and, what is more, intends to pay you a visit."

"Upton coming here!" exclaimed Glencore, with an expression of mingled astonishment and confusion; "how do you know that?"

"He writes me from Long's to say that

he'll be with us by Friday, or, if not, by Saturday."

"What a miserable place to receive him," exclaimed Glencore. "As for you, Harcourt, you know how to rough it, and have bivouacked too often under the stars to care much for satin curtains. But think of Upton here! How is he to eat?—where is he to sleep?"

"By Jove! we'll treat him handsomely. Don't you fret yourself about his comforts; besides, I've seen a great deal of Upton, and, with all his fastidiousness and refinement, he's a thorough good fellow at taking things for the best. Invite him to Chatsworth, and the chances are he'll find twenty things to fault—with the place, the cookery, and the servants; but take him down to the Highlands, lodge him in a shieling, with bannocks for breakfast and a Fyne herring for supper, and I'll wager my life you'll not see a ruffle in his temper, nor hear a word of impatience out of his mouth."

"I know that he is a well-bred gentleman," said Glencore, half pettishly; "but I have no fancy for putting his good manners

to a severe test, particularly at the cost of my own feelings."

"I tell you again he shall be admirably treated; he shall have my room; and, as for his dinner, Master Billy and I are going to make a raid amongst the lobster-pots. And what with turbot, oysters, grouse-pie, and mountain mutton, I'll make the diplomatist sorrow that he is not accredited to some native sovereign in the Arran islands, instead of some 'mere German Hertzog.' He can only stay one day."

"One day!"

"That's all; he is over head and ears in business, and he goes down to Windsor on Thursday, so that there is no help for it."

"I wish I may be strong enough; I hope to Heaven that I may rally——" Glencore stopped suddenly as he got thus far, but the agitation the words cost him seemed most painful.

"I say again, don't distress yourself about Upton—leave the care of entertaining him to *me*. I'll vouch for it that he leaves us well satisfied with his welcome."

"It was not of *that* I was thinking," said he, impatiently; "I have much to say to

him—things of great importance. It may be that I shall be unequal to the effort; I cannot answer for my strength for a day—not for an hour. Could you not write to him, and ask him to defer his coming till such time as he can spare me a week, or at least some days?"

"My dear Glencore, you know the man well, and that we are lucky if we can have him on his *own* terms, not to think of imposing *ours;* he is sure to have a number of engagements while he is in England."

"Well, be it so," said Glencore, sighing, with the air of a man resigning himself to an inevitable necessity.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE GREAT MAN'S ARRIVAL.

"NOT come, Craggs!" said Harcourt, as, late on the Saturday evening, the Corporal stepped on shore, after crossing the lough.

"No, sir, no sign of him. I sent a boy away to the top of 'the Devil's Mother,' where you have a view of the road for eight miles, but there was nothing to be seen."

"You left orders at the post-office to have a boat in readiness if he arrived?"

"Yes, Colonel," said he, with a military salute; and Harcourt now turned moodily towards the Castle.

Glencore had scarcely ever been a very cheery residence, but latterly it had become far gloomier than before. Since the night of Lord Glencore's sudden illness, there had

grown up a degree of constraint between the two friends, which, to a man of Harcourt's disposition, was positive torture. They seldom met, save at dinner, and then their reserve was painfully evident.

The boy, too, in unconscious imitation of his father, grew more and more distant; and poor Harcourt saw himself in that position, of all others the most intolerable—the unwilling guest of an unwilling host.

"Come or not come," muttered he to himself, "I'll bear this no longer. There is, besides, no reason why I should bear it. I'm of no use to the poor fellow; he does not want—he never sees me. If anything, my presence is irksome to him; so that, happen what will, I'll start to-morrow, or next day at farthest."

He was one of those men to whom deliberation on any subject was no small labour; but who, once that they have come to a decision, feel as if they had acquitted a debt, and need give themselves no further trouble in the matter. In the enjoyment of this newly-purchased immunity he entered the room, where Glencore sat impatiently awaiting him.

"Another disappointment!" said the Viscount, anxiously.

"Yes; Craggs has just returned, and says there's no sign of a carriage for miles on the Oughterard road."

"I ought to have known it," said the other, in a voice of guttural sternness. "He was ever the same; an appointment with him was an engagement meant only to be binding on those who expected him."

"Who can say what may have detained him? He was in London on business—public business, too; and even if he had left town, how many chance delays there are in travelling."

"I have said every one of these things over to myself, Harcourt; but they don't satisfy me. This is a habit with Upton. I've seen him do the same with his Colonel, when he was a subaltern; I've heard of his arriving late to a court dinner, and only smiling at the dismay of the horrified courtiers."

"Egad," said Harcourt, bluntly, "I don't see the advantage of the practice. One is so certain of doing fifty things in this daily life to annoy one's friends, through mere inad-

vertence or forgetfulness, that I think it is but sorry fun to incur their ill-will by malice prepense."

"That is precisely why he does it."

"Come, come, Glencore; old Rixson was right when he said, 'Heaven help the man whose merits are canvassed while they wait dinner for him.' I'll order up the soup, for if we wait any longer we'll discover Upton to be the most graceless vagabond that ever walked."

"I know his qualities, good and bad," said Glencore, rising, and pacing the room with slow, uncertain steps; "few men know him better. None need tell me of his abilities; none need instruct me as to his faults. What others do by accident, *he* does by design. He started in life by examining how much the world would bear from him; he has gone on, profiting by the experience, and improving on the practice."

"Well, if I don't mistake me much, he'll soon appear to plead his own cause. I hear oars coming speedily in this direction."

And so saying, Harcourt hurried away to resolve his doubts at once. As he reached the little jetty, over which a large signal-

fire threw a strong red light, he perceived that he was correct, and was just in time to grasp Upton's hand as he stepped on shore.

"How picturesque all this, Harcourt," said he, in his soft, low voice; "a leaf out of 'Rob Roy.' Well, am I not the mirror of punctuality, eh?"

"We looked for you yesterday, and Glencore has been so impatient."

"Of course he has; it is the vice of your men who do nothing. How is he? Does he dine with us? Fritz, take care those leather pillows are properly aired, and see that my bath is ready by ten o'clock. Give me your arm, Harcourt; what a blessing it is to be such a strong fellow."

"So it is, by Jove! I am always thankful for it. And you—how do you get on? You look well."

"Do I?" said he, faintly, and pushing back his hair with an almost fine-ladylike affectation. "I'm glad you say so. It always rallies me a little to hear I'm better. You had my letter about the fish?"

"Ay, and I'll give you such a treat."

"No, no, my dear Harcourt; a fried mac-

kerel, or a whiting and a few crumbs of bread —nothing more."

"If you insist, it shall be so; but I promise you I'll not be of your mess, that's all. This is a glorious spot for turbot—and such oysters!"

"Oysters are forbidden me, and don't let me have the torture of temptation. What a charming place this seems to be—very wild, very rugged."

"Wild—rugged! I should think it is," muttered Harcourt.

"This pathway, though, does not bespeak much care. I wish our friend yonder would hold his lantern a little lower. How I envy you the kind of life you lead here—so tranquil, so removed from all bores. By the way, you get the newspapers tolerably regularly?"

"Yes, every day."

"That's all right. If there be a luxury left to any man after the age of forty, it is to be let alone. It's the best thing I know of. What a terrible bit of road! They might have made a pathway."

"Come, don't grow fainthearted. Here we are; this is Glencore."

"Wait a moment. Just let him raise that lantern. Really this is very striking—a very striking scene altogether. The doorway excellent, and that little watch-tower, with its lone-star light, a perfect picture."

"You'll have time enough to admire all this; and we are keeping poor Glencore waiting," said Harcourt, impatiently.

"Very true; so we are."

"Glencore's son, Upton," said Harcourt, presenting the boy, who stood, half pride, half bashfulness, in the porch.

"My dear boy, you see one of your father's oldest friends in the world," said Upton, throwing one arm on the boy's shoulder, apparently caressing, but as much to aid himself in ascending the stair. "I'm charmed with your old Schloss here, my dear," said he, as they moved along. "Modern architects cannot attain the massive simplicity of these structures. They have a kind of confectionary style, with false ornament and inappropriate decoration, that bears about the same relation to the original that a suit of Drury Lane tinfoil does to a coat of Milanese mail armour. This gallery is in excellent taste."

And as he spoke, the door in front of him opened, and the pale, sorrow-struck, and sickly figure of Glencore stood before him. Upton, with all his self-command, could scarcely repress an exclamation at the sight of one whom he had seen last in all the pride of youth and great personal powers; while Glencore, with the instinctive acuteness of his morbid temperament, as quickly saw the impression he had produced, and said, with a deep sigh,

"Ay, Horace—a sad wreck."

"Not so, my dear fellow," said the other, taking the thin, cold hand within both his own; "as seaworthy as ever, after a little dry-docking and refitting. It is only a craft like that yonder," and he pointed to Harcourt, "that can keep the sea in all weathers, and never care for the carpenter. You and I are of another build."

"And you—how are you?" asked Glencore, relieved to turn attention away from himself, while he drew his arm within the other's.

"The same poor ailing mortal you always knew me," said Upton, languidly; "doomed to a life of uncongenial labour, condemned to

climates totally unsuited to me, I drag along existence, only astonished at the trouble I take to live, knowing pretty well as I do what life is worth."

"'Jolly companions every one!' By Jove!" said Harcourt, "for a pair of fellows who were born on the sunny side of the road, I must say you are marvellous instances of gratitude."

"That excellent hippopotamus," said Upton, "has no thought for any calamity if it does not derange his digestion! How glad I am to see the soup! Now, Glencore, you shall witness no invalid's appetite."

As the dinner proceeded, the tone of conversation grew gradually lighter and pleasanter. Upton had only to permit his powers to take their free course to be agreeable, and now talked away on whatever came uppermost, with a charming union of reflectiveness with repartee. If a very rigid purist might take exception to occasional Gallicisms in expression, and a constant leaning to French modes of thought, none could fail to be delighted with the graceful ease with which he wandered from theme to theme, adorning each with some trait of

that originality which was his chief characteristic. Harcourt was pleased without well knowing how or why, while to Glencore it brought back the memory of the days of happy intercourse with the world, and all the brilliant hours of that polished circle in which he had lived. To the pleasure, then, which his powers conferred, there succeeded an impression of deep melancholy, so deep as to attract the notice of Harcourt, who hastily asked,

"If he felt ill?"

"Not worse," said he, faintly, "but weak —weary; and I know Upton will forgive me if I say good night."

"What a wreck indeed!" exclaimed Upton, as Glencore left the room with his son. "I'd not have known him!"

"And yet until the last half-hour I have not seen him so well for weeks past. I'm afraid something you said about Alicia Villars affected him," said Harcourt.

"My dear Harcourt, how young you are in all these things," said Upton, as he lighted his cigarette. "A poor heart-stricken fellow, like Glencore, no more cares for what *you* would think a painful allusion, than an old

weather-beaten sailor would for a breezy morning on the Downs at Brighton. His own sorrows lie too deeply moored to be disturbed by the light winds that ruffle the surface. And to think that all this is a woman's doing! Isn't that what's passing in your mind, eh, most gallant Colonel?"

"By Jove, and so it was! They were the very words I was on the point of uttering," said Harcourt, half nettled at the ease with which the other read him.

"And of course you understand the source of the sorrow?"

"I'm not quite so sure of that," said Harcourt, more and more piqued at the tone of bantering superiority with which the other spoke.

"Yes, you do, Harcourt; I know you better than you know yourself. Your thoughts were these: Here's a fellow with a title, a good name, good looks, and a fine fortune, going out of the world of a broken heart, and all for a woman!"

"You knew her," said Harcourt, anxious to divert the discussion from himself.

"Intimately. Ninetta della Torre was the belle of Florence — what am I saying? of

all Italy — when Glencore met her, about eighteen years ago. The Palazzo della Torre was the best house in Florence. The old prince, her grandfather — her father was killed in the Russian campaign—was spending the last remnant of an immense fortune in every species of extravagance. Entertainments that surpassed those of the Pitti Palace in splendour, fêtes that cost fabulous sums, banquets voluptuous as those of ancient Rome, were things of weekly occurrence. Of course every foreigner, with any pretension to distinction, sought to be presented there, and we English happened just at that moment to stand tolerably high in Italian estimation. I am speaking of some eighteen or twenty years back, before we sent out that swarm of domestic economists, who, under the somewhat erroneous notion of foreign cheapness, by a system of incessant higgle and bargain, cutting down every one's demand to the measure of their own pockets, end by making the word Englishman a synonyme for all that is mean, shabby, and contemptible. The English of that day were of another class; and assuredly their characteristics, as regards munificence and

high dealing, must have been strongly impressed upon the minds of foreigners, seeing how their successors, very different people, have contrived to trade upon the mere memory of these qualities ever since."

"Which all means, that 'my lord' stood cheating better than those who came after him," said Harcourt, bluntly.

"He did so; and precisely for that very reason he conveyed the notion of a people who do not place money in the first rank of all their speculations, and who aspire to no luxury that they have not a just right to enjoy. But to come back to Glencore. He soon became a favoured guest at the Palazzo della Torre. His rank, name, and station, combined with very remarkable personal qualities, obtained for him a high place in the old Prince's favour, and Ninetta deigned to accord him a little more notice than she bestowed on any one else. I have, in the course of my career, had occasion to obtain a near view of royal personages and their habits, and I can say with certainty, that never in any station, no matter how exalted, have I seen as haughty a spirit as in that girl. To the pride of her birth, rank, and

splendid mode of life, were added the consciousness of her surpassing beauty, and the graceful charm of a manner quite unequalled. She was incomparably superior to all around her, and, strangely enough, she did not offend by the bold assertion of this superiority. It seemed her due, and no more. Nor was it the assumption of mere flattered beauty. Her house was the resort of persons of the very highest station, and in the midst of them—some even of royal blood—she exacted all the deference and all the homage that she required from others."

"And they accorded it?" asked Harcourt, half contemptuously.

"They did; and so had you also if you had been in their place!. Believe me, most gallant Colonel, there is a wide difference between the empty pretension of mere vanity and the daring assumption of conscious power. This girl saw the influence she wielded. As she moved amongst us she beheld the homage, not always willing, that awaited her. She felt that she had but to distinguish any one man there, and he became for the time as illustrious as though touched by the sword or en-

to my room?" said he, as Craggs answered his ring at the bell.

The Corporal bowed an assent.

"The Colonel usually retires early, I suppose?" said Upton.

"Yes, sir; at ten to a minute."

"Ah! it is one—nearly half-past one—now, I perceive," said he, looking at his watch. "That accounts for his drowsiness," muttered he between his teeth. "Curious vegetables are these old campaigners. Wish him good night for me when he awakes, will you?"

And so saying, he proceeded on his way, with all that lassitude and exhaustion which it was his custom to throw into every act which demanded the slightest exertion.

"Any more stairs to mount, Mr. Craggs?" said he, with a bland but sickly smile.

"Yes, sir; two flights more."

"Oh, dear! couldn't you have disposed of me on the lower floor?—I don't care where or how, but something that requires no climbing. It matters little, however, for I'm only here for a day."

"We could fit up a small room, sir, off the library."

"Do so, then. A most humane thought; for if I *should* remain another night—— Not at it yet?" cried he, peevishly, at the aspect of an almost perpendicular stair before him.

"This is the last flight, sir; and you'll have a splendid view for your trouble, when you awake in the morning."

"There is no view ever repaid the toil of an ascent, Mr. Craggs, whether it be to an attic or the Righi. Would you kindly tell my servant, Mr. Schöfer, where to find me, and let him fetch the pillows, and put a little rosemary in a glass of water in the room—it corrects the odour of the night-lamp. And I should like my coffee early—say at seven, though I don't wish to be disturbed afterwards. Thank you, Mr. Craggs—good night. Oh! one thing more. You have a doctor here—would you just mention to him that I should like to see him to-morrow about nine or half-past? Good night—good night."

And with a smile, worthy of bestowal upon a court beauty, and a gentle inclination of the head, the very ideal of gracefulness, Sir Horace dismissed Mr. Craggs, and closed the door.

CHAPTER IX.

A MEDICAL VISIT.

Mr. Schöfer moved through the dimly-lighted chamber with all the cat-like stealthiness of an accomplished valet, arranging the various articles of his master's wardrobe, and giving, so far as he was able, the semblance of an accustomed spot to this new and strange locality. Already, indeed, it was very unlike what it had been during Harcourt's occupation. Guns, whips, fishing-tackle, dog-leashes, and landing-nets had all disappeared, as well as uncouth specimens of costume for boating or the chase; and in their place were displayed all the accessories of an elaborate toilet, laid out with a degree of pomp and ostentation somewhat in contrast to the place. A richly-embroidered dressing-gown lay on the back of a chair,

plaintive voice from the bed. "Let me have my aconite—eighteen drops; a full dose to-day, for this journey has brought back the pains."

"Yes, Excellenz," said Fritz, in a voice of broken accentuation.

"I slept badly," continued his master, in the same complaining tone. "The sea beat so heavily against the rocks, and the eternal plash, plash, all night irritated and worried me. Are you giving me the right tincture?"

"Yes, Excellenz," was the brief reply.

"You have seen the doctor—what is he like, Fritz?"

A strange grimace and a shrug of the shoulders were Mr. Schöfer's only answer.

"I thought as much," said Upton, with a heavy sigh. "They called him the wild growth of the mountains last night, and I fancied what that was like to prove. Is he young?"

A shake of the head implied not.

"Nor old?"

Another similar movement answered the question.

"Give me a comb, Fritz, and fetch the glass here." And now Sir Horace arranged

his silky hair more becomingly, and having exchanged one or two smiles with his image in the mirror, lay back on the pillow, saying, "Tell him I'm ready to see him."

Mr. Schöfer proceeded to the door, and at once presented the obsequious figure of Billy Traynor, who, having heard some details of the rank and quality of his new patient, made his approaches with a most deferential humility. It was true, Billy knew that my Lord Glencore's rank was above that of Sir Horace, but to his eyes there was the far higher distinction of a man of undoubted ability—a great speaker, a great writer, a great diplomatist—and Billy Traynor, for the first time in his life, found himself in the presence of one whose claims to distinction stood upon the lofty basis of personal superiority. Now, though bashfulness was not the chief characteristic of his nature, he really felt abashed and timid as he drew near the bed, and shrank under the quick but searching glance of the sick man's cold, grey eyes.

"Place a chair, and leave us, Fritz," said Sir Horace; and then turning slowly round, smiled as he said, "I'm happy to make your

acquaintance, sir. My friend, Lord Glencore, has told me with what skill you treated him, and I embrace the fortunate occasion to profit by your professional ability."

"I'm your humble slave, sir," said Billy, with a deep, rich brogue; and the manner of the speaker, and his accent, seemed so to surprise Upton, that he continued to stare at him fixedly for some seconds without speaking.

"You studied in Scotland, I believe," said he, with one of the most engaging smiles, while he hazarded the question.

"Indeed, then, I did not, sir," said Billy, with a heavy sigh; "all I know of the *ars medicātrix* I picked up—*currendo per campos*—as one may say, vagabondising through life, and watching my opportunities. Nature gave me the Hippocratic turn, and I did my best to improve it."

"So that you never took out a regular diploma?" said Sir Horace, with another and still blander smile.

"Sorra one, sir! I'm a doctor just as a man is a poet—by sheer janius! 'Tis the study of nature makes both one and the other; that is, when there's the raal stuff

— the *divinus afflatus* — inside. Without you have that you're only a rhymester or a quack."

"You would, then, trace a parallel between them!" said Upton, graciously.

"To be sure, sir! ould Heyric says, that the poet and the physician is one:

> "'For he who reads the clouded skies,
> And knows the utterings of the deep,
> Can surely see in human eyes
> The sorrows that so heart-locked sleep.'

The human system is just a kind of universe of its own; and the very same faculties that investigate the laws of nature in one case is good in the other."

"I don't think the author of 'King Arthur' supports your theory," said Upton, gently.

"Blackmore was an ass; but maybe he was as great a bosthoon in physic as in poetry," rejoined Billy, promptly.

"Well, doctor," said Sir Horace, with one of those plaintive sighs in which he habitually opened the narrative of his own suffering, "let us descend to meaner things, and talk of myself. You see before you one

who, in some degree, is the reproach of medicine. That file of prescriptions beside you will show that I have consulted almost every celebrity in Europe; and that I have done so unsuccessfully, it is only necessary that you should look on these worn looks—these wasted fingers—this sickly, feeble frame. Vouchsafe me a patient hearing for a few moments, while I give you some insight into one of the most intricate cases, perhaps, that has ever engaged the faculty."

It is not our intention to follow Sir Horace through his statement, which in reality comprised a sketch of half the ills that the flesh is heir to. Maladies of heart, brain, liver, lungs, the nerves, the arteries, even the bones, contributed their aid to swell the dreary catalogue, which, indeed, contained the usual contradictions and exaggerations incidental to such histories. We could not assuredly expect from our reader the patient attention with which Billy listened to this narrative. Never by a word did he interrupt the description; not even a syllable escaped him as he sat; and even when Sir

Horace had finished speaking, he remained, with slightly drooped head and clasped hands, in deep meditation.

"It's a strange thing," said he, at last; "but the more I see of the aristocracy, the more I'm convinced that they ought to have doctors for themselves alone, just as they have their own tailors and coachmakers—chaps that could devote themselves to the study of physic for the peerage, and never think of any other disorders but them that befal people of rank. Your mistake, Sir Horace, was in consulting the regular middle-class practitioner, who invariably imagined there must be a disease to treat."

"And you set me down as a hypochondriac, then?" said Upton, smiling.

"Nothing of the kind! You have a malady sure enough, but nothing organic. 'Tis the oceans of tinctures, the sieves full of pills, the quarter-casks of bitters you're takin', has played the divil with you. The human ma-chine is like a clock, and it depends on the proportion the parts bear to each other, whether it keeps time. You may make the spring too strong, or the chain too thick, or the balance too heavy for the rest of the

works, and spoil everything just by over security. That's what your doctors was doing with their tonics and cordials. They didn't see, here's a poor washy frame, with a wake circulation and no vigour. If we nourish him his heart will go quicker, to be sure, but what will his brain be at? There's the rub! His brain will begin to go fast, too, and already it's going the pace. 'Tis soothin' and calmin' you want; allaying the irritability of an irrascible, fretful nature, always on the watch for self-torment. Say-bathin', early hours, a quiet, mopin' kind of life, that would, maybe, tend to torpor and sleepiness —them's the first things you need; and for exercise, a little work in the garden that you'd take interest in."

"And no physic?" asked Sir Horace.

"Sorra screed! not as much as a powder or a draught, barrin'," said he, suddenly catching the altered expression of the sick man's face, "a little mixture of hyoscyamus I'll compound for you myself. This, and friction over the region of the heart, with a mild embrocation, is all my tratement!"

"And you have hopes of my recovery?" asked Sir Horace, faintly.

"My name isn't Billy Traynor, if I'd not send you out of this hale and hearty before two months. I read you like a printed book."

"You really give me great confidence, for I perceive you understand the tone of my temperament. Let us try this same embrocation at once; I'll most implicitly obey you in everything."

"My head on a block, then, but I'll cure you," said Billy, who determined that no scruples on his side should mar the trust reposed in him by the patient. "But you must give yourself entirely up to me, not only as to your eatin' and drinkin', but your hours of recreation and study, exercise, amusement, and all, must be at my biddin'. It is the principle of harmony between the moral and physical nature constitutes the whole sacret of my system. To be stimulatin' the nerves, and lavin' the arteries dormant, is like playing a jig to minuet time—all must move in simultaneous action, and the cerebellum, the great flywheel of the whole, must be made to keep orderly time, d'ye mind."

"I follow you with great interest," said Sir Horace, to whose subtle nature there

was an intense pleasure in the thought of having discovered what he deemed a man of original genius under this unpromising exterior. "There is but one bar to these arrangements—I must leave this at once; I ought to go to-day. I must be off to-morrow."

"Then I'll not take the helm when I can't pilot you through the shoals," said Billy. "To begin my system, and see you go away before I developed my grand invigoratin' arcanum, would be only to destroy your confidence in an elegant discovery."

"Were I only as certain as you seem to be——" began Sir Horace, and then stopped.

"You'd stay and be cured, you were goin' to say. Well, if you didn't feel that same trust in me, you'd be right to go; for it is that very confidence that turns the balance. Ould Babbington used to say that between a good physician and a bad one there was just the difference between a pound and a guinea. But between the one you trust and the one you don't, there's all the way between Billy Traynor and the Bank of Ireland!"

"On that score every advantage is with

you," said Upton, with all the winning grace of his incomparable manner; "and I must now bethink me how I can manage to prolong my stay here." And with this he fell into a musing fit, letting drop occasionally some stray word or two, to mark the current of his thoughts—"The Duke of Headwater's on the thirteenth—Ardroath Castle the Tuesday after—Morehampton for the Derby day. These easily disposed of. Prince Boratinsky, about that Warsaw affair, must be attended to; a letter, yes, a letter, will keep that question open. Lady Grencliffe *is* a difficulty; if I plead illness, she'll say I'm not strong enough to go to Russia. I'll think it over." And with this he rested his head on his hands, and sank into profound reflection. "Yes, doctor," said he, at length, as though summing up his secret calculations, "health is the first requisite. If you can but restore me, you will be—I am above the mere personal consideration—you will be the means of conferring an important service on the King's Government. A variety of questions, some of them deep and intricate, are now pending, of which I alone understand the secret meaning. A new hand

would infallibly spoil the game; and yet, in my present condition, how could I bear the fatigues of long interviews, ministerial deliberations, incessant note-writing, and evasive conversations?"

"Utterly unpossible!" exclaimed the doctor.

"As you observe, it is utterly impossible," rejoined Sir Horace, with one of his own dubious smiles; and then, in a manner more natural, resumed: "We public men have the sad necessity of concealing the sufferings on which others trade for sympathy. We must never confess to an ache or a pain, lest it be rumoured that we are unequal to the fatigues of office; and so is it that we are condemned to run the race with broken health and shattered frame, alleging all the while that no exertion is too much, no effort too great for us."

"And maybe, after all, it's that very struggle that makes you more than common men," said Billy. "There's a kind of irritability that keeps the brain at stretch, and renders it equal to higher efforts than ever accompanies good every-day health. Dyspepsia is the soul of a prose-writer, and a

slight ossification of the aortic valves is a great help to the imagination."

"Do you really say so?" asked Sir Horace, with all the implicit confidence with which he accepted any marvel that had its origin in medicine.

"Don't you feel it yourself, sir?" asked Billy. "Do you ever pen a reply to a knotty state-paper as nately as when you've the heartburn?—are you ever as epigrammatic as when you're driven to a listen slipper?—and when do you give a minister a jobation as purtily as when you are labourin' under a slight indigestion? Not that it would sarve a man to be permanently in gout or the cholic; but for a spurt like a cavalry charge, there's nothing like eatin' something that disagrees with you."

"An ingenious notion," said the diplomatist, smiling.

"And now I'll take my lave," said Billy, rising. "I'm going out to gather some mountain-colchicum and sorrel, to make a diaphoretic infusion; and I've to give Master Charles his Greek lesson; and blister the colt—he's thrown out a bone spavin; and, after that, Handy Carr's daughter has the

shakin' ague, and the smith at the forge is to be bled—all before two o'clock, when 'the lord' sends for me; but the rest of the day, and the night, too, I'm your honor's obaydient."

And with a low bow, repeated in a more reverential manner at the door, Billy took his leave and retired.

CHAPTER X.

A DISCLOSURE.

"Have you seen Upton?" asked Glencore eagerly of Harcourt, as he entered his bedroom.

"Yes: he vouchsafed me an audience during his toilet, just as the old kings of France were accustomed to honour a favourite with one."

"And is he full of miseries at the dreary place, the rough fare, and deplorable resources of this wild spot?"

"Quite the reverse; he is charmed with everything and everybody. The view from his window is glorious; the air has already invigorated him. For years he has not breakfasted with the same appetite; and he finds, that of all the places he has ever

chanced upon, this is the one veritable exact spot which suits him."

"This is very kind on his part," said Glencore, with a faint smile. "Will the humour last, Harcourt? That is the question."

"I trust it will; at least it may well endure for the short period he means to stay; although already he has extended that, and intends remaining till next week."

"Better still," said Glencore, with more animation of voice and manner. "I was already growing nervous about the brief space in which I was to crowd in all that I want to say to him; but if he will consent to wait a day or two, I hope I shall be equal to it."

"In his present mood there is no impatience to be off; on the contrary, he has been inquiring as to all the available means of locomotion, and by what convenience he is to make various sea and land excursions."

"We have no carriage — we have no roads, even," said Glencore, peevishly.

"He knows all that; but he is concerting measures about a certain turf-kish, I think

they call it, which, by the aid of pillows to lie on, and donkeys to drag, can be made a most useful vehicle; while, for longer excursions, he has suggested a "conveniency" of wheels and axles to the punt, rendering it equally eligible on land or water. Then he has been designing great improvements in horticulture, and given orders about a rake, a spade, and a hoe for himself. I'm quite serious," said Harcourt, as Glencore smiled with a kind of droll incredulity. "It is perfectly true; and as he hears that the messenger occasionally crosses the lough to the post—when there are no letters there, he hints at a little simple telegraph for Leenane, which should announce what the mail contains, and which might be made useful to convey other intelligence. In fact, all *my* changes here will be as for nothing to *his* reforms, and between us you'll not know your own house again, if you even be able to live in it."

"You have already done much to make it more habitable, Harcourt," said Glencore, feelingly; "and if I had not the grace to thank you for it, I'm not the less grateful. To say truth, my old friend, I half doubted

whether it was an act of friendship to attach me ever so lightly to a life of which I am well weary. Ceasing as I have done for years back to feel interest in anything, I dread whatever may again recal me to the world of hopes and fears—that agitated sea of passion, wherein I have no longer vigour to contend. To speak to me then of plans to carry out, schemes to accomplish, was to point to a future of activity and exertion; and I"—here he dropped his voice to a deep and mournful tone—"can have but one future!—the dark and dreary one before the grave."

Harcourt was too deeply impressed by the solemnity of these words to venture on a reply, and he sat silently contemplating the sorrow-struck, but placid features of the sick man.

"There is nothing to prevent a man struggling, and successfully, too, against mere adverse fortune," continued Glencore. "I feel at times that if I had been suddenly reduced to actual beggary—left without a shilling in the world—that there are many ways in which I could eke out subsistence. A great defeat to my personal ambition I could re-

sist. The casualty that should exclude me from a proud position and public life, I could bear up against with patience, and I hope with dignity. Loss of fortune—loss of influence—loss of station—loss of health, even, dearer than them all, can be borne. There is but one intolerable ill—one that no time alleviates, no casuistry diminishes — loss of honour! Ay, Harcourt, rank and riches do little for him who feels himself the inferior of the meanest that elbows him in a crowd; and the man whose name is a scoff and a gibe has but one part to fill—to make himself forgotten."

"I hope I'm not deficient in a sense of personal honour, Glencore," said Harcourt; "but I must say, that I think your reasoning on this point is untenable and wrong."

"Let us not speak more of it," said Glencore, faintly. "I know not how I have been led to allude to what it is better to bear in secret, than to confide even to friendship;" and he pressed the strong fingers of the other, as he spoke, in his own feeble grasp. "Leave me now, Harcourt, and send Upton here. It may be that the time is come when I shall be able to speak to him."

"You are too weak to-day, Glencore—too much agitated. Pray defer this interview."

"No, Harcourt; these are my moments of strength. The little energy now left to me is the fruit of strong excitement. Heaven knows how I shall be to-morrow."

Harcourt made no further opposition, but left the room in search of Upton.

It was full an hour later when Sir Horace Upton made his appearance in Glencore's chamber, attired in a purple dressing-gown, profusely braided with gold, loose trousers as richly brocaded, and a pair of real Turkish slippers, resplendent with costly embroidery; a small fez of blue velvet, with a deep gold tassel, covered the top of his head, at either side of which his soft silky hair descended in long massy waves, apparently negligently, but in reality arranged with all the artistic regard to effect of a consummate master. From the gold girdle at his waist depended a watch, a bunch of keys, a Turkish purse, an embroidered tobacco-bag, a gorgeously chased smelling-bottle, and a small stiletto, with a topaz handle. In one hand he carried a meerschaum, the other leaned upon a

cane, and with all the dependance of one who could not walk without its aid. The greeting was cordial and affectionate on both sides; and when Sir Horace, after a variety of preparations to ensure his comfort, at length seated himself beside the bed, his features beamed with all their wonted gentleness and kindness.

"I'm charmed at what Harcourt has been telling me, Upton," said Glencore; "and that you really can exist in all the savagery of this wild spot."

"I'm in ecstasy with the place, Glencore. My memory cannot recal the same sensations of health and vigour I have experienced since I came here. Your cook is first-rate; your fare is exquisite; the quiet is a positive blessing; and that queer creature, your doctor, is a very remarkable genius."

"So he is," said Glencore, gravely.

"One of those men of original mould, who leave cultivation leagues behind, and arrive at truth by a bound."

"He certainly treated me with considerable skill."

"I'm satisfied of it; his conversation is

replete with shrewd and intelligent observation; and he seems to have studied his art more like a philosopher than a mere physician of the schools; and depend upon it, Glencore, the curative art must mainly depend upon the secret instinct which divines the malady, less by the rigid rules of acquired skill than by that prerogative of genius, which, however exerted, arrives at its goal at once. Our conversation had scarcely lasted a quarter of an hour, when he revealed to me the exact seat of all my sufferings, and the most perfect picture of my temperament. And then his suggestions as to treatment were all so reasonable—so well argued."

"A clever fellow—no doubt of it," said Glencore.

"But he is far more than that, Glencore. Cleverness is only a manufacturing quality—that man supplies the raw article also. It has often struck me as very singular that such heads are not found in *our* class—they belong to another order altogether. It is possible that the stimulus of necessity engenders the greatest of all efforts, calling to the operations of the mind the continued

strain for contrivance; and thus do we find the most remarkable men are those, every step of whose knowledge has been gained with a struggle."

"I suspect you are right," said Glencore; "and that our old system of school education, wherein all was rough, rugged, and difficult, turned out better men than the present-day habit of everything-made-easy and everybody-made-anything. Flippancy is the characteristic of our age, and we owe it to our teaching."

"By the way, what do you mean to do with Charley?" said Upton. "Do you intend him for Eton?"

"I scarcely know—I make plans only to abandon them," said Glencore, gloomily.

"I'm greatly struck with him. He is one of those fellows, however, who require the nicest management, and who either rise superior to all around them, or drop down into an indolent, dreamy existence, conscious of power, but too bashful or too lazy to exert it."

"You have hit him off, Upton, with all your own subtlety; and it was to speak of that boy I have been so eager to see you."

Glencore paused as he said these words, and passed his hand over his brow, as though to prepare himself for the task before him.

"Upton," said he, at last, in a voice of deep and solemn meaning, "the resolution I am about to impart to you is not unlikely to meet your strenuous opposition; you will be disposed to show me strong reasons against it on every ground; you may refuse me that amount of assistance I shall ask of you to carry out my purpose; but if your arguments were all unanswerable, and if your denial to aid me was to sever the old friendship between us, I'd still persist in my determination. For more than two years the project has been before my mind. The long hours of the day, the longer ones of the night, have found me deep in the consideration of it. I have repeated over to myself everything that my ingenuity could suggest against it—I have said to my own heart all that my worst enemy could utter, were he to read the scheme and detect my plan—I have done more—I have struggled with myself to abandon it; but in vain. My heart is linked to it; it forms the one sole tie that attaches me to

life. Without it, the apathy that I feel stealing over me would be complete, and my existence become a mournful dream. In a word, Upton, all is passionless within me, save one sentiment; and I drag on life merely for a '*Vendetta.*'"

Upton shook his head mournfully, as the other paused here, and said,

"This is disease, Glencore!"

"Be it so; the malady is beyond cure," said he, sternly.

"Trust me it is not so," said Upton, gently; "you listened to my persuasions on a more——"

"Ay, that I did!" cried Glencore, interrupting; "and have I ever ceased to rue the day I did so? But for *your* arguments, and I had not lived this life of bitter, self-reproaching misery; but for you, and my vengeance had been sated ere this!"

"Remember, Glencore," said the other, "that you had obtained all the world has decreed as satisfaction. He met you, and received your fire; you shot him through the chest; not mortally, it is true, but to carry to his grave a painful, lingering disease. To have insisted on his again meeting you would

have been little less than murder. No man could have stood your friend in such a quarrel. I told you so then, I repeat it now, *he* could not fire at you; what, then, was it possible for you to do?"

"Shoot him—shoot him like a dog!" cried Glencore, while his eyes gleamed like the glittering eyes of an enraged beast. "You talk of his lingering life of pain; think of *mine;* have some sympathy for what *I* suffer! Would all the agony of *his* whole existence equal one hour of the torment he has bequeathed to me, its shame and ignominy?"

"These are things which passion can never treat of, my dear Glencore."

"Passion alone can feel them," said the other, sternly. "Keep subtleties for those who use like weapons. As for me, no casuistry is needed to tell me I am dishonoured, and just as little to tell me I must be avenged! If *you* think differently, it were better not to discuss this question further between us; but I did think I could have reckoned upon you, for I felt you had barred my first chance of a vengeance."

"Now, then, for your plan, Glencore," said Upton, who, with all the dexterity of

his calling, preferred opening a new channel in the discussion, to aggravating difficulties by a further opposition.

"I must rid myself of her! There's my plan!" cried Glencore, savagely. "You have it all in that resolution. Of no avail is it that I have separated my fortune from hers so long as she bears my name, and renders it infamous in every city of Europe. Is it to *you*, who live in the world—who mix with men of every country—that I need tell this? If a man cannot throw off such a shame, he must sink under it."

"But you told me you had an unconquerable aversion to the notion of seeking a divorce?"

"So I had—so I have! The indelicate, the ignominious course of a trial at law, with all its shocking exposure, would be worse than a thousand deaths! To survive the suffering of all the licensed ribaldry of some gowned coward, aspersing one's honour, calumniating, inventing, and, when invention failed, suggesting motives, the very thought of which in secret had driven a man to madness! to endure this—to read it—to know it went published over the wide globe, till

one's shame became the gossip of millions—and then—with a verdict extorted from pity, damages awarded to repair a broken heart and a sullied name—to carry this disgrace before one's equals, to be again discussed, sifted, and cavilled at! No, Upton; this poor, shattered brain would give way under such a trial. To compass it in mere fancy is already nigh to madness! It must be by other means than these that I attain my object!"

The terrible energy with which he spoke actually frightened Upton, who fancied that his reason had already begun to show signs of decline.

"The world has decreed," resumed Glencore, "that in these conflicts all the shame shall be the husband's, but it shall not be so here! *she* shall have her share, ay, and by Heaven! not the smaller share either!"

"Why, what would you do?" asked Upton, eagerly.

"Deny my marriage—call her my mistress!" cried Glencore, in a voice shaken with passion and excitement.

"But your boy—your son, Glencore?"

"He shall be a bastard! You may hold

up your hands in horror, and look with all your best got-up disgust at such a scheme; but if you wish to see me swear to accomplish it, I'll do so now before you, ay, on my knees before you! When we eloped from her father's house at Castellamare, we were married by a priest at Capri; of the marriage no trace exists. The more legal ceremony was performed before you, as Chargé d'Affaires at Naples—of that I have the registry here; nor, except my courier, Sanson, is there a living witness. If you determine to assert it, you will do so without a fragment of proof, since every document that could substantiate it is in my keeping. You shall see them for yourself. She is, therefore, in my power; and will any man dare to tell me how I should temper that power?"

"But your boy, Glencore, your boy."

"Is my boy's station in the world a prouder one by being the son of the notorious Lady Glencore, or as the offspring of a nameless mistress? What avail to him that he should have a title stained by *her* shame? Where is he to go? In what land is he to live, where her infamy has not reached? Is it not a thousand times better that he enter

life, ignoble and unknown—to start in the world's race with what he may of strength and power—than drag on an unhonoured existence, shunned by his equals, and only welcome where it is disgrace to find companionship?"

"But you surely have never contemplated all the consequences of this rash resolve. It is the extinction of an ancient title, the alienation of a great estate, when once you have declared your boy illegitimate."

"He is a beggar; I know it; the penalty he must pay is a heavy one: but think of *her*, Upton, think of the haughty Viscountess, revelling in splendour, and, even in all her shame, the flattered, welcomed guest of that rotten, corrupt society she lives in. Imagine her in all the pride of wealth and beauty, sought after, adulated, worshipped as she is, suddenly struck down by the brand of this disgrace, and left upon the world without fortune, without rank, without even a name. To be shunned like a leper by the very meanest of those it had once been an honour when she recognised them. Picture to yourself this woman, degraded to the position of all that is most vile and contemptible. She,

that scarcely condescended to acknowledge as her equals the best-born and the highest, sunk down to the hopeless infamy of a mistress. They tell me she laughed on the day I fainted at seeing her entering the San Carlos, at Naples—laughed as they carried me down the steps into the fresh air! Will she laugh now, think you? Shall I be called 'Le Pauvre Sire' when she hears this? Was there ever a vengeance more terrible—more complete?"

"Again, I say, Glencore, you have no right to involve others in the penalty of her fault. Laying aside every higher motive, you can have no more right to deny your boy's claim to his rank and fortune than I, or any one else. It cannot be alienated nor extinguished; by his birth he became the heir to your title and estates."

"He has no birth, sir, he is a bastard—who shall deny it? *You* may," added he, after a second's pause; "but where's your proof? Is not every probability as much against you as all documentary evidence, since none will ever believe that I could rob myself of the succession, and make over my [illegible] to Heaven knows what remote re[illegible]

"And do you expect me to become a party to this crime?" asked Upton, gravely.

"You baulked me in one attempt at vengeance, and I think you owe me a reparation!"

"Glencore," said Upton, solemnly, "we are both of us men of the world; men who have seen life in all its varied aspects, sufficiently to know the hollowness of more than half the pretension men trade upon as principle; we have witnessed mean actions and the very lowest motives amongst the highest in station; and it is not for either of us to affect any overstrained estimate of men's honour and good faith; but I say to you, in all sincerity, that not alone do I refuse you all concurrence in the act you meditate, but I hold myself open to denounce and frustrate it."

"You do!" cried Glencore, wildly, while with a bound he sat up in his bed, grasping the curtain convulsively for support.

"Be calm, Glencore, and listen to me patiently."

"You declare that you will use the confidence of this morning against me," cried Glencore, while the lines in his face became

indented more deeply, and his bloodless lips quivered with passion. "You take your part with *her*."

"I only ask that you would hear me."

"You owe me four thousand five hundred pounds, Sir Horace Upton," said Glencore, in a voice barely above a whisper, but every accent of which was audible.

"I know it, Glencore," said Upton, calmly. "You helped me by a loan of that sum in a moment of great difficulty. Your generosity went further, for you took, what nobody else would, my personal security."

Glencore made no reply, but throwing back the bedclothes, slowly and painfully arose, and with tottering and uncertain steps, approached a table. With a trembling hand he unlocked a drawer, and taking out a paper, opened and scanned it over.

"There's your bond, sir," said he, with a hollow, cavernous voice, as he threw it into the fire, and crushed it down into the flames with the poker. "There is now nothing between us. You are free to do your worst!" And as he spoke, a few drops of dark blood trickled from his nostril, and he fell senseless upon the floor.

CHAPTER XI.

SOME LIGHTS AND SHADOWS OF DIPLOMATIC LIFE.

THERE is a trait in the lives of great diplomatists, of which it is just possible some one or other of my readers may not have heard, which is, that none of them have ever attained to any great eminence without an attachment—we can find no better word for it—to some woman of superior understanding, who has united within herself great talents for society, with a high and soaring ambition.

They who only recognise in the world of politics the dry details of ordinary parliamentary business, poor-law questions, sanitary rules, railroad bills, and colonial grants, can form but a scanty notion of the excitement derived from the high interests of party,

and the great game played by about twenty mighty gamblers, with the whole world for the table, and kingdoms for counters. In this "grand rôle" women perform no ignoble part; nay, it were not too much to say that theirs is the very motive-power of the whole vast machinery.

Had we any right to step beyond the limits of our story for illustration, it would not be difficult to quote names enough to show that we are speaking not at hazard, but "from book;" and that great events derive far less of their impulse from "the lords" than from "the ladies of creation." Whatever be the part they take in these contests, their chief attention is ever directed, not to the smaller battle-field of home questions, but to the greater and wider campaign of international politics. Men may wrangle and hair-split, and divide about a harbour bill or a road session; but women occupy themselves in devising how thrones may be shaken and dynasties disturbed—how frontiers may be changed, and nationalities trafficked; for, strange as it may seem, the stupendous incidents which mould human destinies are more under the influence of

passion and intrigue, than the commonest events of every-day life.

Our readers may, and not very unreasonably, begin to suspect that it was in some moment of abstraction we wrote "Glencore" at the head of these pages, and that these speculations are but the preface to some very abstruse reflections upon the political condition of Europe. But no: they are simply intended as a prelude to the fact, that Sir Horace Upton was not exempt from the weakness of his order, and that he, too, reposed his trust upon a woman's judgment.

The name of his illustrious guide was the Princess Sabloukoff, by birth a Pole, but married to a Russian of vast wealth and high family, from whom she separated early in life, to mingle in the world with all the "prestige" of position, riches, and—greater than either—extreme beauty, and a manner of such fascination, as made her name of European celebrity.

When Sir Horace first met her, he was the junior member of our embassy at Naples, and she the distinguished leader of fashion in that city. We are not about to busy our-

selves with the various narratives which professed to explain her influence at Court, or the secret means to which she owed her ascendancy over royal highnesses, and her sway over cardinals. Enough that she possessed such, and that the world knew it. The same success attended her at Vienna and at Paris. She was courted and sought after everywhere; and if her arrival was not fêted with the public demonstrations that await royalty, it was assuredly an event recognised with all that could flatter her vanity, or minister to her self-esteem.

When Sir Horace was presented to her as an Attaché, she simply bowed and smiled. He renewed his acquaintance some ten years later as a Secretary, when she vouchsafed to say she remembered him. A third time, after a lapse of years, he came before her as a Chargé d'Affaires, when she conversed with him; and lastly, when time had made him a Minister, and with less generosity had laid its impress upon herself, she gave him her hand, and said,

"My dear Horace, how charming to see an old friend, if you be good enough to let me call you so."

And he was so; he accepted the friendship as frankly as it was proffered. He knew that time was, when he could have no pretension to this distinction; but the beautiful Princess was no longer young; the fascinations she had wielded were already a kind of Court tradition; archdukes and ambassadors were no more her slaves; nor was she the terror of jealous queens and Court favourites. Sir Horace knew all this; but he also knew that, she being such, his ambition had never dared to aspire to her friendship, and it was only in her days of declining fortune that he could hope for such distinction.

All this may seem very strange and very odd, dear reader; but we live in very strange and very odd times, and more than one-half the world is only living on "second-hand" — second-hand shawls and second-hand speeches, second-hand books, and court suits and opinions are all rife; and why not second-hand friendships?

Now, the friendship between a bygone beauty of forty—and we will not say how many more years—and a hackneyed, half-disgusted man of the world, of the same

age, is a very curious contract. There is no love in it; as little is there any strong tie of esteem; but there is a wonderful bond of self-interest and mutual convenience. Each seems to have at last found "one that understands him;" similarity of pursuit has engendered similarity of taste. They have each seen the world from exactly the same point of view, and they have come out of it equally heart-wearied and tired, stored with vast resources of social knowledge, and with a keen insight into every phase of that complex machinery by which one half the world cheats the other.

Madame de Sabloukoff was still handsome —she had far more than what is ill-naturedly called the remains of good looks. She had a brilliant complexion, lustrous dark eyes, and a profusion of the most beautiful hair. She was, besides, a most splendid dresser. Her toilet was the very perfection of taste, and if a little inclining to over-magnificence, not the less becoming to one whose whole air and bearing assumed something of queenly dignity.

In the world of society there is a very great prestige attends those who have at

some one time played a great part in life. The deposed king, the ex-minister, the banished general, and even the bygone beauty, receive a species of respectful homage, which the wider world without-doors is not always ready to accord them. Good breeding, in fact, concedes what mere justice might deny; and they who have to fall back upon "souvenirs" for their greatness, always find their advantage in associating with the class whose prerogative is good manners.

The Princess Sabloukoff was not, however, one of those who can live upon the interest of a bygone fame. She saw that, when the time of coquetry and its fascinations has passed, that still, with faculties like hers, there was yet a great game to be played. Hitherto she had only studied characters; now she began to reflect upon events. The transition was an easy one, to which her former knowledge contributed largely its assistance. There was scarcely a royalty, hardly a leading personage in Europe, she did not know personally and well. She had lived in intimacy with ministers, and statesmen, and great politicians. She knew them in

all that "life of the salon," where men alternately expand into frankness, and practise the wily devices of their crafty callings. She had seen them in all the weaknesses, too, of inferior minds, eager after small objects, tormented by insignificant cares. They who habitually dealt with these mighty personages, only beheld them in their dignity of station, or surrounded by the imposing accessories of office. What an advantage, then, to regard them closer and nearer—to be aware of their short-comings, and acquainted with the secret springs of their ambitions!

The Princess and Sir Horace very soon saw that each needed the other. When Robert Macaire accidentally met an accomplished gamester, who "turned the king" as often as he did, and could reciprocate every trick and artifice with him, he threw down the cards, saying, "Embrassons-nous, nous sommes frères!" Now, the illustration is a very ignoble one, but it conveys no very inexact idea of the bond which united these two distinguished individuals.

Sir Horace was one of those fine, acute intelligences which may be gapped and

blunted if applied to rough work, but are splendid instruments where you would cut cleanly, and cut deep. She saw this at once. He, too, recognised in her a wonderful knowledge of life, joined to vast powers of employing it with profit. No more was wanting to establish a friendship between them. Dispositions must be, to a certain degree, different between those who are to live together as friends, but tastes must be alike. Theirs were so. They had the same veneration for the same things, the same regard for the same celebrities, and the same contempt for the small successes which were engaging the minds of many around them. If the Princess had a real appreciation of the fine abilities of Sir Horace, he estimated, at their full value, all the resources of her wondrous tact and skill, and the fascinations which even yet surrounded her.

Have we said enough to explain the terms of this alliance? or must we make one more confession, and own that her insidious praise —a flattery too delicate and fine ever to be committed to absolute eulogy—convinced Sir Horace that she alone, of all the world,

was able to comprehend the vast stores of his knowledge, and the wide measure of his capacity as a statesman.

In the great game of statecraft, diplomatists are not above looking into each other's hands; but this must always be accomplished by means of a confederate. How terribly alike are all human rogueries, whether the scene be a conference at Vienna, or the tent of a thimblerig at Ascot! La Sabloukoff was unrivalled in the art. She knew how to push raillery and *persiflage* to the very frontiers of truth, and even peep over and see what lay beyond. Sir Horace traded on the material with which she supplied him, and acquired the reputation of being all that was crafty and subtle in diplomacy.

How did Upton know this? Whence came he by that? What mysterious source of information is he possessed of? Who could have revealed such a secret to him? were questions often asked in that dreary old drawing-room of Downing-street, where men's destinies are shaped, and the fate of millions decided, from four o'clock to six of an afternoon.

Often and often were the measures of the cabinet shaped by the tidings which arrived with all the speed of a foreign courier—over and over again were the speeches in Parliament based upon information received from him. It has even happened that the news from his hand has caused the telegraph of the Admiralty to signalise the Thunderer to put to sea with all haste. In a word, he was the trusted agent of our Government, whether ruled by a Whig or a Tory, and his despatches were ever regarded as a sure warranty for action.

The English Minister at a foreign court labours under one great disadvantage, which is, that his policy, and all the consequences that are to follow it, are rarely, if ever, shaped with any reference to the state of matters then existing in his own country. Absorbed as he is in great European questions, how can he follow, with sufficient attention, the course of events at home, or recognise, in the signs and tokens of the division list, the changeful fortunes of party? He may be advising energy when the cry is all for temporising; counselling patience and submission, when the nation is eager for a row;

recommend religious concessions in the very week that Exeter Hall is denouncing toleration; or actually suggesting aid to a Government that a popular orator has proclaimed to be everything that is unjust and ignominious.

It was Sir Horace Upton's fortune to have fallen into one of these embarrassments. He had advised the Home Government to take some measures, or, at least, look with favour on certain movements of the Poles in Russia, in order the better to obtain some concessions then required from the cabinet of the Czar. The Premier did not approve of the suggestion, nor was it like to meet acceptance at home. We were in a pro-Russian fever at the moment. Some mob disturbances at Norwich, a Chartist meeting at Stockport, and something else in Wales, had frightened the nation into a hot stage of conservatism; and never was there such an ill-chosen moment to succour Poles, or awaken dormant nationalities.

Upton's proposal was rejected. He was even visited with one of those disagreeable acknowledgments by which the Foreign Office reminds a speculative minister that he

is going *ultra crepidam.* When an envoy is snubbed, he always asks for leave of absence. If the castigation be severe, he invariably, on his return to England, goes to visit the leader of the Opposition. This is the ritual. Sir Horace, however, only observed it in half. He came home; but after his first morning's attendance at the Foreign Office, he disappeared; none saw or heard of him. He knew well all the value of mystery, and he accordingly disappeared from public view altogether.

When, therefore, Harcourt's letter reached him, proposing that he should visit Glencore, the project came most opportunely; and that he only accepted it for a day, was in the spirit of his habitual diplomacy, since he then gave himself all the power of an immediate departure, or permitted the option of remaining gracefully, in defiance of all pre-engagements, and all plans to be elsewhere. We have been driven, for the sake of this small fact, to go a great way round in our history; but we promise our readers that Sir Horace was one of those people whose motives are never tracked without a consider-

able *détour*. The reader knows now why he was at Glencore—he already knew, how.

The terrible interview with Glencore brought back a second relapse of greater violence than the first, and it was nigh a fortnight ere he was pronounced out of danger. It was a strange life that Harcourt and Upton led in that dreary interval. Guests of one whose life was in utmost peril, they met in that old gallery each day to talk, in half-whispered sentences, over the sick man's case, and his chances of recovery.

Harcourt frankly told Upton that the first relapse was the consequence of a scene between Glencore and himself. Upton made no similar confession. He reflected deeply, however, over all that had passed, and came to the conclusion that, in Glencore's present condition, opposition might prejudice his chance of recovery, but never avail to turn him from his project. He also set himself to study the boy's character, and found it, in all respects, the very type of his father's. Great bashfulness, united to great boldness, timidity, and distrust, were there side by side with a rash, impetuous nature, that would hesitate at nothing in pursuit of an object. Pride,

however, was the great principle of his being, —the good and evil motive of all that was in him. He had pride on every subject. His name, his rank, his station, a consciousness of natural quickness, a sense of aptitude to learn whatever came before him—all gave him the same feeling of pride.

"There's a deal of good in that lad," said Harcourt to Upton, one evening, as the boy had left the room; "I like his strong affection for his father, and that unbounded faith he seems to have in Glencore's being better than every one else in the world."

"It is an excellent religion, my dear Harcourt, if it could only last!" said the diplomate, smiling amiably.

"And why shouldn't it last?" asked the other, impatiently.

"Just because nothing lasts that has its origin in ignorance. The boy has seen nothing of life—has had no opportunity for forming a judgment, or instituting a comparison between any two objects. The first shot that breaches that same fortress of belief, down will come the whole edifice!"

"You'd give a lad to the Jesuits, then, to be trained up in every artifice and distrust?"

"Far from it, Harcourt. I think their system a mistake all through. The science of life must be self-learned, and it is a slow acquisition. All that education can do is to prepare the mind to receive it. Now, to employ the first years of a boy's life by storing him with prejudices, is just to encumber a vessel with a rotten cargo, that she must throw overboard before she can load with a profitable freight."

"And is it in that category you'd class his love for his father?" asked the Colonel.

"Of course not; but any unnatural or exaggerated estimate of him is a great error, to lead to an equally unfair depreciation when the time of deception is past. To be plain, Harcourt, is that boy fitted to enter one of our great public schools, stand the hard, rough usage of his own equals, and buffet it as you or I have done?"

"Why not? or, at least, why shouldn't he become so after a month or two?"

"Just because in that same month or two he'd either die broken-hearted, or plunge his knife into the heart of some comrade who insulted him."

"Not a bit of it. You don't know him at

all. Charley is a fine give-and-take fellow; a little proud, perhaps, because he lives apart from all that are his equals. Let Glencore just take courage to send him to Harrow or Rugby, and my life on it, but he'll be the manliest fellow in the school."

"I'll undertake, without Harrow or Rugby, that the boy should become something even greater than that," said Upton, smiling.

"Oh, I know you sneer at my ideas of what a young fellow ought to be," said Harcourt; "but, somehow, you did not neglect these same pursuits yourself. You can shoot as well as most men, and you ride better than any I know of."

"One likes to do a little of everything, Harcourt," said Upton, not at all displeased at this flattery; "and somehow it never suits a fellow, who really feels that he has fair abilities, to do anything badly; so that it comes to this: one does it well, or not at all. Now, you never heard me touch the piano?"

"Never."

"Just because I'm only an inferior performer, and so I only play when perfectly alone."

"Egad, if I could only master a waltz, or

one of the melodies, I'd be at it whenever any one would listen to me."

"You're a good soul, and full of amiability, Harcourt," said Upton; but the words sounded very much as though he said, "You're a dear, good, sensible creature, without an atom of self-respect or esteem."

Indeed, so conscious was Harcourt that the expression meant no compliment, that he actually reddened and looked away. At last he took courage to renew the conversation, and said:

"And what would you advise for the boy, then?"

"I'd scarcely lay down a system; but I'll tell you what I would not do. I'd not bore him with mathematics; I'd not put his mind on the stretch in any direction; I'd not stifle the development of any taste that may be struggling within him, but rather encourage and foster it, since it is precisely by such an indication you'll get some clue to his nature. Do you understand me?"

"I'm not quite sure I do; but I believe you'd leave him to something like utter idleness."

"What to *you*, my dear Harcourt, would

be utter idleness, I've no doubt, but not to *him*, perhaps."

Again the Colonel looked mortified, but evidently knew not how to resent this new sneer.

"Well," said he, after a pause, "the lad will not require to be a genius."

"So much the better for him, probably; at all events, so much the better for his friends, and all who are to associate with him."

Here he looked fixedly at Upton, who smiled a most courteous acquiescence in the opinion—a politeness that made poor Harcourt perfectly ashamed of his own rudeness, and he continued, hurriedly,

"He'll have abundance of money. The life Glencore leads here, will be like a long minority to him. A fine old name and title, and the deuce is in it if he can't rub through life pleasantly enough with such odds."

"I believe you are right, after all, Harcourt," said Upton, sighing, and now speaking in a far more natural tone; "it *is* 'rubbing through' with the best of us, and no more!"

"If you mean that the process is a very irksome one, I enter my dissent at once,"

broke in Harcourt. "I'm not ashamed to own that I like life prodigiously; and, if I be spared to say so, I'm sure I'll have the same story to tell fifteen or twenty years hence, and yet I'm not a genius!"

"No," said Upton, smiling a bland assent.

"Nor a philosopher either," said Harcourt, irritated at the acknowledgment.

"Certainly not," chimed in Upton, with another smile.

"Nor have I any wish to be one or the other," rejoined Harcourt, now really provoked. "I know right well that if I were in trouble or difficulty to-morrow — if I wanted a friend to help me with a loan of some thousand pounds—it is not to a genius or a philosopher I'd look for the assistance."

It is ever a chance shot that explodes a magazine, and so is it that a random speech is sure to hit the mark that has escaped all the efforts of skilful direction.

Upton winced and grew pale at these last words, and he fixed his penetrating grey eyes upon the speaker with a keenness all his own. Harcourt, however, bore the look without the slightest touch of uneasiness. The honest

Colonel had spoken without any hidden meaning, nor had he the slightest intention of a personal application in his words. Of this fact Upton appeared soon to be convinced, for his features gradually recovered their wonted calmness.

"How perfectly right you are, my dear Harcourt," said he, mildly. "The man who expects to be happier by the possession of genius, is like one who would like to warm himself through a burning-glass."

"Egad, that is a great consolation for us slow fellows," said Harcourt, laughing; "and now what say you to a game at *écarté*, for I believe it is just the one solitary thing I am more than your match in?"

"I accept inferiority in a great many others," said Upton, blandly; "but I must decline the challenge, for I have a letter to write, and our post here starts at daybreak."

"Well, I'd rather carry the whole bag than indite one of its contents," said the Colonel, rising; and, with a hearty shake of the hand, he left the room.

A letter was fortunately not so great an

infliction to Upton, who opened his desk at once, and with a rapid hand traced the following lines:

"My dear Princess,—My last will have told you how and when I came here; I wish I but knew in what way to explain why I still remain! Imagine the dreariest desolation of Calabria in a climate of fog and sea-drift—sunless skies, leafless trees, impassable roads, the out-door comforts; the joys within depending on a gloomy old house, with a few gloomier inmates, and a host on a sick bed. Yet with all this, I believe I am better; the doctor, a strange, unsophisticated creature, a cross between Galen and Caliban, seems to have hit off what the great dons of science never could detect—the true seat of my malady. He says—and he really reasons out his case ingeniously—that the brain has been working for the inferior nerves, not limiting itself to cerebral functions, but actually performing the humbler office of muscular direction, and so forth; in fact, a field-marshal doing duty for a common soldier! I almost fancy I can corroborate his view, from internal sensations; I have a

kind of secret instinct that he is right. Poor brain, why it should do the work of another department, with abundance of occupation of its own, I cannot make out. But to turn to something else. This is not a bad refuge just now. They cannot make out where I am, and all the inquiries at my club are answered by a vague impression that I have gone back to Germany, which the people at F. O. are aware is not the case. I have already told you that my suggestion has been negatived in the Cabinet; it was ill-timed, Allington says, but I ventured to remind his lordship that a policy requiring years to develop, and more years still to push to a profitable conclusion, is not to be reduced to the category of mere apropos measures. He was vexed, and replied weakly and angrily—I rejoined and left him. Next day he sent for me, but my reply was, 'I was leaving town'—and I left. I don't want the Bath, because it would be 'ill-timed;' so that they must give me Vienna, or be satisfied to see me in the House and the Opposition!

"Your tidings of Brekenoff came exactly in the nick. Allington said pompously that

they were sure of him; so I just said, 'Ask him if they would like our sending a Consular Agent to Cracow?' It seems that he was so flurried by a fancied detection, that he made a full acknowledgment of all. But even at this Allington takes no alarm. The malady of the Treasury benches is deafness, with a touch of blindness. What a cumbrous piece of bungling machinery is this boasted 'representative government' of ours! No promptitude—no secrecy! Everything debated, and discussed, and discouraged, before begun; every blot-hit for an antagonist to profit by! Even the characters of our public men exposed, and their weaknesses displayed to view, so that every state of Europe may see where to wound us, and through whom! There is no use in the Countess remaining here any longer; the King never noticed her at the last ball; she is angry at it, and if she shows her irritation she'll spoil all. I always thought Josephine would fail in England. It is, indeed, a widely different thing to succeed in the small Courts of Germany and our great whirlpool of St. James. *You* could do it,

my dear friend; but where is the other dare attempt it?

"Until I hear from you again I can come to no resolution. One thing is clear, they do not, or they will not, see the danger I have pointed out to them. All the home policy of our country is drifting, day by day, towards a democracy—how, in the name of common sense, then, is our foreign policy to be maintained at the standard of the Holy Alliance? What an absurd juxtaposition is there between popular rights and an alliance with the Czar! This peril will overtake them one day or another, and then, to escape from national indignation, the minister, whoever he may be, will be driven to make war. But I can't wait for this; and yet were I to resign, my resignation would not embarrass them—it would irritate and annoy, but not disconcert. Brekenoff will surely go home on leave. You ought to meet him; he is certain to be at Ems. It is the refuge of disgraced diplomacy. Try if something cannot be done with him. He used to say formerly yours were the only dinners now in Europe. He hates Allington. This feeling, and his love

for white truffles, are, I believe, the only clues to the man. Be sure, however, that the truffles are Piedmontese; they have a slight flavour of garlic, rather agreeable than otherwise. Like Josephine's lisp, it is a defect that serves for a distinction. The article in the *Beau Monde* was clever, prettily written, and even well worked out; but state affairs are never really well treated save by those who conduct them. One must have played the game himself to understand all the nice subtleties of the contest. These, your mere reviewer or newspaper scribe never attains to; and then he has no reserves—none of those mysterious concealments, that are to negotiations like the eloquent pauses of conversation—the moment when dialogue ceases and the real interchange of ideas begins.

"The fine touch, the keen 'aperçu,' belongs alone to those who have had to exercise these same qualities in the treatment of great questions; and hence it is, that though the Public be often much struck, and even enlightened, by the powerful 'article' or the able 'leader,' the Statesman is rarely taught anything by the journalist,

save the force and direction of public opinion.

"I had a deal to say to you about poor Glencore, whom you tell me you remember; but, how to say it? He is broken-hearted—literally broken-hearted—by her desertion of him. It was one of those ill-assorted leagues which cannot hold together. Why they did not see this, and make the best of it—sensibly, dispassionately, even amicably—it is difficult to say. An Englishman, it would seem, must always hate his wife if she cannot love him; and after all, how involuntary are all affections, and what a severe penalty is this for an unwitting offence.

"He ponders over this calamity, just as if it were the crushing stroke by which a man's whole career was to be finished for ever. The stupidity of all stupidities is in these cases to fly from the world, and avoid society. By doing this a man rears a barrier he never can repass; he proclaims aloud his sentiment of the injury, quite forgetting all the offence he is giving to the hundred and fifty others, who, in the same predicament as himself, are by no means disposed to turn

hermits on account of it. Men make revolutionary governments, smash dynasties, transgress laws, but they cannot oppose *convenances!*

"I need scarcely say that there is nothing to be gained by reasoning with him. He has worked himself up to a chronic fury, and talks of vengeance all day long like a Corsican. For company here I have an old brother officer of my days of tinsel and pipe-clay —an excellent creature whom I amuse myself by tormenting. There is also Glencore's boy—a strange, dreamy kind of haughty fellow, an exaggeration of his father in disposition, but with good abilities. These are not the elements of much social agreeability, but you know, dear friend, how little I stand in need of what is called company. Your last letter, charming as it was, has afforded me all the companionship I could desire. I have re-read it till I know it by heart. I could almost chide you for that delightful little party in my absence, but of course it was, as all you ever do, is, perfectly right; and after all I am, perhaps, not sorry that you had those people when I was away, so that we shall be more *chez nous* when we

meet. But when is that to be? Who can tell? My medico insists upon five full weeks for my cure. Allington is very likely, in his present temper, to order me back to my post. You seem to think that you must be in Berlin when Seckendorf arrives, so that—— But I will not darken the future by gloomy forebodings. I *could* leave this—that is, if any urgency required it,—at once, but, if possible, it is better I should remain, at least a little longer. My last meeting with Glencore was unpleasant. Poor fellow, his temper is not what it used to be, and he is forgetful of what is due to one whose nerves are in the sad state of mine. You shall hear all my complainings when we meet, dear princess, and with this I kiss your hand, begging you to accept all '*mes hommages*' *et mon estime.*

"H. U.

"Your letter must be addressed 'Leenane, Ireland.' Your last had only 'Glencore' on it, and not very legibly either, so that it made what I wished *I* could do, 'the tour of Scotland,' before reaching me."

Sir Horace read over his letter carefully,

as though it had been a despatch, and when he had done, folded it up with an air of satisfaction. He had said nothing that he wished unsaid; and he had mentioned a little about everything he desired to touch upon. He then took his "drops" from a queer-looking little phial he carried about with him, and having looked at his face in a pocket-glass, he half closed his eyes in reverie.

Strange, confused visions were they that flitted through his brain. Thoughts of ambition the most daring, fancies about health, speculations in politics, finance, religion, literature, the arts, society—all came and went. Plans and projects jostled each other at every instant. Now his brow would darken, and his thin lips close tightly, as some painful impression crossed him; now again a smile, a slight laugh even, betrayed the passing of some amusing conception. It was easy to see how such a nature could suffice to itself, and how little he needed of that give-and-take which companionship supplies. He could—to steal a figure from our steam language—he could "bank his fires," and await any emergency, and, while

scarcely consuming any fuel, prepare for the most trying demand upon his powers. A hasty movement of feet overhead, and the sound of voices talking loudly, aroused him from his reflections, while a servant entered abruptly to say that Lord Glencore wished to see him immediately.

"Is his lordship worse?" asked Upton.

"No, sir; but he was very angry with the young lord this evening about something; and they say that with the passion he opened the bandage on his head, and set the vein a-bleeding again. Billy Traynor is there now, trying to stop it."

"I'll go up-stairs," said Sir Horace, rising, and beginning to fortify himself with caps, and capes, and comforters—precautions that he never omitted when moving from one room to the other.

CHAPTER XII.

A NIGHT AT SEA.

GLENCORE'S chamber presented a scene of confusion and dismay as Upton entered. The sick man had torn off the bandage from his temples, and so roughly as to reopen the half-closed artery, and renew the bleeding. Not alone the bedclothes and the curtains, but the faces of the attendants around him were stained with blood, which seemed the more ghastly from contrast with their pallid cheeks. They moved hurriedly to and fro, scarcely remembering what they were in search of, and evidently deeming his state of the greatest peril. Traynor, the only one whose faculties were unshaken by the shock, sat quietly beside the bed, his fingers firmly compressed upon the orifice of the vessel,

while, with the other hand, he motioned to them to keep silence.

Glencore lay with closed eyes, breathing long and laboured inspirations, and at times convulsed by a slight shivering. His face, and even his lips, were bloodless, and his eyelids of a pale, livid hue. So terribly like the approach of death was his whole appearance, that Upton whispered in the doctor's ear,

"Is it over? Is he dying?"

"No, Upton," said Glencore, for, with the acute hearing of intense nervousness, he had caught the words. "It is not so easy to die."

"There, now—no more talkin'—no discoorsin'—azy and quiet is now the word."

"Bind it up and leave me—leave me with *him;*" and Glencore pointed to Upton.

"I dar'n't move out of this spot," said Billy, addressing Upton. "You'd have the blood coming out, *per saltim*, if I took away my finger."

"You must be patient, Glencore," said Upton, gently; "you know I'm always ready when you want me."

"And you'll not leave this—you'll not desert me?" cried the other, eagerly.

"Certainly not; I have no thought of going away."

"There, now, hould your prate, both of ye, or, by my conscience, I'll not take the responsibility upon me—I will not!" said Billy, angrily. "'Tis just a disgrace and a shame that ye haven't more discretion."

Glencore's lips moved with a feeble attempt at a smile, and, in his faint voice, he said,

"We must obey the doctor, Upton; but don't leave me."

Upton moved a chair to the bedside, and sat down without a word.

"Ye think an artery is like a canal, with a lock-gate to it, I believe," said Billy, in a low, grumbling voice, to Upton, "and you forget all its vermicular motion, as ould Fabricius called it, and that it is only by a coagalum, a kind of barrier, like a mud breakwater, that it can be plugged. Be off out of that, ye spalpeens! be off, every one of yez, and leave us tranquil and paceable!"

This summary command was directed to the various servants, who were still moving

about the room in imaginary occupation. The room was at last cleared of all save Upton and Billy, who sat by the bedside, his hand still resting on the sick man's forehead. Soothed by the stillness, and reduced by the loss of blood, Glencore sank into a quiet sleep, breathing softly and gently as a child.

"Look at him now," whispered Billy to Upton, "and you'll see what philosophy there is in ascribin' to the heart the source of all our emotions. He lies there azy and comfortable, just because the great bellows is working smoothly and quietly. They talk about the brain, and the spinal nerves, and the solar plexus, but give a man a wake, washy circulation, and what is he? He's just like a chap with the finest intentions in the world, but not a sixpence in his pocket to carry them out! A fine, well-regulated, steady-batin' heart is like a credit on the bank—you draw on it, and your draft isn't dishonoured!"

"What was it brought on this attack?" asked Upton, in a whisper.

"A shindy he had with the boy. I wasn't here. There was nobody by; but when I met Master Charles on the stairs, he flew

past me like lightning, and I just saw by a glimpse that something was wrong. He rushed out with his head bare, and his coat all open, and it sleetin' terribly! Down he went towards the lough, at full speed, and never minded all my callin' after him."

"Has he returned?" asked Upton.

"Not as I know, sir. We were too much taken up with the lord to ask after him."

"I'll just step down and see," said Sir Horace, who arose, and left the room on tiptoe.

To Upton's inquiry all made the same answer. None had seen the young lord—none could give any clue as to whither he had gone. Sir Horace at once hastened to Harcourt's room, and after some vigorous shakes, succeeded in awakening the Colonel, and by dint of various repetitions at last put him in possession of all that had occurred.

"We must look after the lad," cried Harcourt, springing from his bed and dressing with all haste. "He is a rash, hot-headed fellow; but even if it were nothing else, he might get his death in such a night as this."

The wind dashed wildly against the win-

dow-panes as he spoke, and the old timbers of the frame rattled fearfully.

"Do you remain here, Upton. I'll go in search of the boy. Take care Glencore hears nothing of his absence."

And with a promptitude that bespoke the man of action, Harcourt descended the stairs and set out.

The night was pitch dark; sweeping gusts of wind bore the rain along in torrents, and the thunder rolled incessantly, its clamour increased by the loud beating of the waves as they broke upon the rocks. Upton had repeated to Harcourt that Billy saw the boy going towards the sea-shore, and in this direction he now followed. His frequent excursions had familiarised him with the place, so that even at night Harcourt found no difficulty in detecting the path and keeping it. About half an hour's brisk walking brought him to the side of the lough, and the narrow flight of steps cut in the rock, which descended to the little boat-quay. Here he halted, and called out the boy's name several times. The sea, however, was running mountains high, and an immense drift, sweeping over the rocks, fell in sheets

of scattered foam beyond them; so that Harcourt's voice was drowned by the uproar. A small shealing under the shelter of the rock formed the home of a boatman; and at the crazy door of this humble cot Harcourt now knocked violently.

The man answered the summons at once, assuring him that he had not heard or seen any one since the night closed in; adding, at the same time, that in such a tempest a boat's crew might have landed without his knowing it.

"To be sure," continued he, after a pause, "I heard a chain rattlin' on the rock soon after I went to bed, and I'll just step down and see if the yawl is all right."

Scarcely had he left the spot, when his voice was heard calling out from below,

"She's gone!—the yawl is gone! the lock is broke with a stone, and she's away!"

"How could this be? no boat could leave in such a sea," cried Harcourt, eagerly.

"She could go out fast enough, sir. The wind is north-east, due; but how long she'll keep the sea is another matter."

"Then he'll be lost!" cried Harcourt, wildly.

"Who, sir—who is it?" asked the man.

"Your master's son!" cried he, wringing his hands in anguish.

"Oh, murther! murther!" screamed the boatman, "we'll never see him again. 'Tis out to say—into the wild ocean he'll be blown!"

"Is there no shelter—no spot he could make for?"

"Barrin' the islands, there's not a spot between this and America."

"But he could make the islands—you are sure of that?"

"If the boat was able to live through the say. But sure I know him well; he'll never take in a reef or sail; but sit there, with the helm hard up, just never carin' what came of him! Oh, musha! musha! what druv him out such a night as this!"

"Come, it's no time for lamenting, my man; get the launch ready, and let us follow him. Are you afraid?"

"Afraid!" replied the man, with a touch of scorn in his voice; "faix, it's little fear troubles me; but, maybe, you won't like to be in her yourself when she's once out. I've none belongin' to me—father, mother, chick

or child; but you may have many a one that's near to you."

"My ties are, perhaps, as light as your own," said Harcourt. "Come, now, be alive. I'll put ten gold guineas in your hand if you can overtake him."

"I'd rather see his face than have two hundred," said the man, as, springing into the boat, he began to haul out the tackle from under the low half-deck, and prepare for sea.

"Is your honour used to a boat, or ought I to get another man with me?" asked the sailor.

"Trust me, my good fellow; I have had more sailing than yourself, and in more treacherous seas, too," said Harcourt, who, throwing off his cloak, proceeded to help the other, with an address that bespoke a practised hand.

The wind blew strongly off the shore, so that scarcely was the foresail spread, than the boat began to move rapidly through the water, dashing the sea over her bows, and plunging wildly through the waves.

"Give me a hand now with the hal'yard," said the boatman; "and when the mainsail

is set, you'll see how she'll dance over the top of the waves, and never wet us."

"She's too light in the water, if anything," said Harcourt, as the boat bounded buoyantly under the increased press of canvas.

"Your honour's right; she'd do better with half a ton of iron in her. Stand by, sir, always, with the peak hal'yards; get the sail aloft in, when I give you the word."

"Leave the tiller to me, my man," said Harcourt, taking it as he spoke. "You'll soon see that I'm no new hand at the work."

"She's doing it well," said the man. "Keep her up! keep her up! there's a spit of land runs out here; in a few minutes more we'll have say room enough."

The heavier roll of the waves, and the increased force of the wind, soon showed that they had gained the open sea; while the atmosphere, relieved of the dark shadows of the mountain, seemed lighter and thinner than in-shore.

"We're to make for the islands, you say, sir?"

"Yes. What distance are they off?"

"About eighteen miles. Two hours, if the wind lasts, and we can bear it."

"And could the yawl stand this?" said Harcourt, as a heavy sea struck the bow, and came in a cataract over them.

"Better than ourselves, if she was manned. Luff! luff!—that's it!" And as the boat turned up to wind, sheets of spray and foam flew over her. "Master Charles hasn't his equal for steerin', if he wasn't alone. Keep her there!—now! steady, sir!"

"Here's a squall coming," cried Harcourt; "I hear it hissing."

Down went the peak, but scarcely in time, for the wind, catching the sail, laid the boat gunwale under. After a struggle, she righted, but with nearly one-third of her filled with water.

"I'd take in a reef, or two reefs," said the man; "but if she couldn't rise to the say, she'll fill and go down. We must carry on, at all events."

"So say I. It's no time to shorten sail, with such a sea running."

The boat now flew through the water, the sea itself impelling her, as with every sudden gust the waves struck the stern.

"She's a brave craft," said Harcourt, as

she rose lightly over the great waves, and plunged down again into the trough of the sea; "but if we ever get to land again, I'll have combings round her to keep her dryer."

"Here it comes!—here it comes, sir!"

Nor were the words well out, when, like a thunder-clap, the wind struck the sail, and bent the mast over like a whip. For an instant it seemed as if she were going down by the prow; but she righted again, and, shivering in every plank, held on her way.

"That's as much as she could do," said the sailor; "and I would not like to ax her to do more."

"I agree with you," said Harcourt, secretly stealing his feet back again into his shoes, which he had just kicked off.

"It's fresh'ning it is every minute," said the man; "and I'm not sure that we could make the islands if it lasts."

"Well—what then?"

"There's nothing for it but to be blown out to say," said he, calmly, as, having filled his tobacco-pipe, he struck a light, and began to smoke.

"The very thing I was wishing for," said

Harcourt, touching his cigar to the bright ashes. "How she labours—do you think she can stand this?"

"She can, if it's no worse, sir."

"But it looks heavier weather outside."

"As well as I can see, it's only beginnin'."

Harcourt listened with a species of admiration to the calm and measured sentiment of the sailor, who, fully conscious of all the danger, yet never, by a word or gesture, showed that he was flurried or excited.

"You have been out on nights as bad as this, I suppose?" said Harcourt.

"Maybe not quite, sir, for it's a great say is runnin'; and, with the wind off shore, we couldn't have this, if there wasn't a storm blowing further out."

"From the westward, you mean?"

"Yes, sir—a wind coming over the whole ocean, that will soon meet the land wind."

"And does that often happen?"

The words were but out, when, with a loud report like a cannon-shot, the wind reversed the sail, snapping the strong sprit in two, and bringing down the whole canvas clattering into the boat. With the aid of a

hatchet, the sailor struck off the broken portion of the spar, and soon cleared the wreck; while the boat, now reduced to a mere foresail, laboured heavily, sinking her prow in the sea at every bound. Her course, too, was now altered, and she flew along parallel to the shore, the great cliffs looming through the darkness, and seeming as if close to them.

"The boy!—the boy!" cried Harcourt; "what has become of him? He never could have lived through that squall."

"If the spar stood, there was an end of us, too," said the sailor; "she'd have gone down by the stern, as sure as my name is Peter."

"It is all over by this time," muttered Harcourt, sorrowfully.

"Pace to him now!" said the sailor, as he crossed himself, and went over a prayer.

The wind now raged fearfully; claps, like the report of cannon, struck the frail boat at intervals, and laid her nearly keel uppermost; while the mast bent like a whip, and every rope creaked and strained to its last endurance. The deafening noise close at hand told where the waves were beating on the

rock-bound coast, or surging with the deep growl of thunder through many a cavern. They rarely spoke, save when some emergency called for a word. Each sat wrapped up in his own dark reveries, and unwilling to break them. Hours passed thus—long, dreary hours of darkness, that seemed like years of suffering, so often in this interval did life hang in the balance.

As morning began to break with a greyish blue light to the westward, the wind slightly abated, blowing more steadily, too, and less in sudden gusts; while the sea rolled in large round waves, unbroken above, and showing no crest of foam.

"Do you know where we are?" asked Harcourt.

"Yes, sir; we're off the Rooks' Point, and if we hold on well, we'll soon be in slacker water."

"Could the boy have reached this, think you?"

The man shook his head mournfully, without speaking.

"How far are we from Glencore?"

"About eighteen miles, sir; but more by land."

"You can put me ashore, then, somewhere hereabouts?"

"Yes, sir, in the next bay; there's a creek we can easily run into."

"You are quite sure he couldn't have been blown out to sea?"

"How could he, sir? There's only one way the wind could dhrive him. If he isn't in the Clough Bay, he's in glory."

All the anxiety of that dreary night was nothing to what Harcourt now suffered, in his eagerness to round the Rooks' Point, and look into the bay beyond it. Controlling it as he would, still would it break out in words of impatience, and even anger.

"Don't curse the boat, yer honour," said Peter, respectfully, but calmly; "she's behaved well to us this night, or we'd not be here now."

"But are we to beat about here for ever?" asked the other, angrily.

"She's doin' well, and we ought to be thankful," said the man; and his tone, even more than his words, served to reprove the other's impatience. "I'll try and set the mainsail on her with the remains of the sprit."

Harcourt watched him, as he laboured away to repair the damaged rigging; but though he looked at him, his thoughts were far away with poor Glencore upon his sick bed, in sorrow and in suffering, and perhaps soon to hear that he was childless. From these he went on to other thoughts. What could have occurred to have driven the boy to such an act of desperation? Harcourt invented a hundred imaginary causes, to reject them as rapidly again. The affection the boy bore to his father seemed the strongest principle of his nature. There appeared to be no event possible in which that feeling would not sway and control him. As he thus ruminated, he was aroused by the sudden cry of the boatman.

"There's a boat, sir, dismasted, ahead of us, and drifting out to say."

"I see her!—I see her!" cried Harcourt; "out with the oars, and let's pull for her."

Heavily as the sea was rolling, they now began to pull through the immense waves, Harcourt turning his head at every instant to watch the boat, which now was scarcely half a mile ahead of them.

"She's empty!—there's no one in her!"

said Peter, mournfully, as, steadying himself by the mast, he cast a look seaward.

"Row on—let us get beside her," said Harcourt.

"She's the yawl!—I know her now," cried the man.

"And empty?"

"Washed out of her with a say, belike," said Peter, resuming his oar, and tugging with all his strength.

A quarter of an hour's hard rowing brought them close to the dismasted boat, which, drifting broadside on the sea, seemed at every instant ready to capsize.

"There's something in the bottom—in the stern-sheets!" screamed Peter. "It's himself!—O blessed Virgin, it's himself!" And, with a bound, he sprang from his own boat into the other.

The next instant he had lifted the helpless body of the boy from the bottom of the boat, and, with a shout of joy, screamed out,

"He's alive! — he's well! — it's only fatigue!"

Harcourt pressed his hands to his face, and sank upon his knees in prayer.

CHAPTER XIII.

A "VOW" ACCOMPLISHED.

JUST as Upton had seated himself at that frugal meal of weak tea and dry toast he called his breakfast, Harcourt suddenly entered the room, splashed and road-stained from head to foot, and in his whole demeanour indicating the work of a fatiguing journey.

"Why, I thought to have had my breakfast with you," cried he, impatiently, "and this is like the diet of a convalescent from fever. Where is the salmon — where the grouse pie—where are the cutlets—and the chocolate—and the poached eggs—and the hot rolls, and the cherry bounce?"

"Say, rather, where are the disordered livers, worn-out stomachs, fevered brains, and impatient tempers, my worthy Colonel?"

said Upton, blandly. "Talleyrand himself once told me that he always treated great questions starving."

"And he made a nice mess of the world in consequence," blustered out Harcourt. "A fellow with an honest appetite, and a sound digestion, would never have played false to so many masters."

"It is quite right that men like you should read history in this wise," said Upton, smiling, as he dipped a crust in his tea, and ate it.

"Men like me are very inferior creatures, no doubt," broke in Harcourt, angrily; "but I very much doubt if men like you had come eighteen miles on foot over a mountain this morning, after a night passed in an open boat at sea—ay, in a gale, by Jove, such as I shan't forget in a hurry."

"You have hit it perfectly, Harcourt, *suum cuique;* and if only we could get the world to see that each of us has his speciality, we should all of us do much better."

By the vigorous tug he gave the bell, and the tone in which he ordered up something to eat, it was plain to see that he scarcely relished the moral Upton had applied to his

speech. With the appearance of the good cheer, however, he speedily threw off his momentary displeasure, and, as he ate and drank, his honest, manly face lost every trace of annoyance. Once only did a passing shade of anger cross his countenance. It was when, suddenly looking up, he saw Upton's eyes settled on him, and his whole features expressing a most palpable sensation of wonderment and compassion.

"Ay," cried he, "I know well what's passing in your mind this minute. You are lost in your pitying estimate of such a mere animal as I am; but, hang it all, old fellow, why not be satisfied with the flattering thought that *you* are of another stamp—a creature of a different order?"

"It does not make one a whit happier," sighed Upton, who never shrunk from accepting the sentiment as his own.

"I should have thought otherwise," said Harcourt, with a malicious twinkle of the eye, for he fancied that he had at last touched the weak point of his adversary.

"No, my dear Harcourt, the *crassæ naturæ* have rather the best of it, since no small share of this world's collisions are

actually physical shocks; and that great, strong pipkin that encloses your brains, will stand much that would smash the poor egg-shell that shrouds mine."

"Whenever you draw a comparison in my favour, I always find at the end I come off worst," said Harcourt, bluntly; and Upton laughed one of his rich musical laughs, in which there was indeed nothing mirthful, but something that seemed to say that his nature experienced a sense of enjoyment higher, perhaps, than anything merely comic could suggest.

"You came off best this time, Harcourt," said he, good-humouredly; and such a thorough air of frankness accompanied the words, that Harcourt was disarmed of all distrust at once, and joined in the laugh heartily.

"But you have not yet told me, Harcourt," said the other, "where you have been, and why you spent your night on the sea."

"The story is not a very long one," replied he, and at once gave a full recital of the events, which our reader has already had before him in our last chapter, adding,

in conclusion, "I have left the boy in a cabin at Belmullet; he is in a high fever, and raving so loud that you could hear him a hundred yards away. I told them to keep cold water on his head, and give him plenty of it to drink—nothing more—till I could fetch our doctor over, for it will be impossible to move the boy from where he is for the present."

"Glencore has been asking for him already this morning. He did not desire to see him, but he begged of me to go to him and speak with him."

"And have you told him that he was from home—that he passed the night away from this?"

"No; I merely intimated that I should look after him, waiting for your return to guide myself afterwards."

"I don't suspect that when we took him from the boat the malady had set in; he appeared rather like one overcome by cold and exhaustion. It was about two hours after—he had taken some food, and seemed stronger — when I said to him, 'Come, Charley, you'll soon be all right again; I have sent a fellow to look after a pony for

you, and you'll be able to ride back, won't you?'"

"'Ride where?' cried he, eagerly.

"'Home, of course,' said I, 'to Glencore.'"

"'Home! I have no home,' cried he; and the wild scream he uttered the words with, I'll never forget. It was just as if that one thought was the boundary between sense and reason, and the instant he had passed it, all was chaos and confusion, for now his raving began—the most frantic imaginations—always images of sorrow, and with a rapidity of utterance there was no following. Of course in such cases the delusions suggest no clue to the cause, but all his fancies were about being driven out of doors an outcast and a beggar, and of his father rising from his sick bed to curse him. Poor boy! Even in this his better nature gleamed forth as he cried, 'Tell him'—and he said the words in a low whisper—'tell him not to anger himself; he is ill, very ill, and should be kept tranquil. Tell him, then, that I am going—going away for ever, and he'll hear of me no more.'" As Harcourt repeated the words, his own voice faltered, and two heavy drops

slowly coursed down his bronzed cheeks. "You see," added he, as if to excuse the emotion, 'that wasn't like raving, for he spoke this just as he might have done if his very heart was breaking."

"Poor fellow!" said Upton; and the words were uttered with real feeling.

"Some terrible scene must have occurred between them," resumed Harcourt; "of that I feel quite certain."

"I suspect you are right," said Upton, bending over his teacup; "and *our* part, in consequence, is one of considerable delicacy; for, until Glencore alludes to what has passed, *we*, of course, can take no notice of it. The boy is ill; he is in a fever; we know nothing more."

"I'll leave you to deal with the father; the son shall be my care. I've told Traynor to be ready to start with me after breakfast, and have ordered two stout ponies for the journey. I conclude there will be no objection in detaining the doctor for the night; what think you, Upton?"

"Do *you* consult the doctor on that head; meanwhile, I'll pay a visit to Glencore. I'll meet you in the library." And so saying,

Upton rose, and gracefully draping the folds of his dressing-gown, and arranging the waving lock of hair which had escaped beneath his cap, he slowly set out towards the sick man's chamber.

Of all the springs of human action, there was not one in which Sir Horace Upton sympathised so little as passion. That any man could adopt a line of conduct from which no other profit could result than what might minister to a feeling of hatred, jealousy, or revenge, seemed to him utterly contemptible. It was not, indeed, the morality of such a course that he called in question, although he would not have contested that point. It was its meanness, its folly, its insufficiency. His experience of great affairs had imbued him with all the importance that was due to temper and moderation. He scarcely remembered an instance where a false move had damaged a negotiation, that it could not be traced to some passing trait of impatience, or some lurking spirit of animosity biding the hour of its gratification.

He had long learned to perceive how much more temperament has to do, in the management of great events, than talent or capacity,

and his opinion of men was chiefly founded on this quality of their nature. It was, then, with an almost pitying estimate of Glencore, that he now entered the room where the sick man lay.

Anxious to be alone with him, Glencore had dismissed all the attendants from his room, and sat, propped up by pillows, eagerly awaiting his approach.

Upton moved through the dimly-lighted room like one familiar to the atmosphere of illness, and took his seat beside the bed with that noiseless quiet which in *him* was a kind of instinct.

It was several minutes before Glencore spoke, and then, in a low, faint voice, he said, "Are we alone, Upton?"

"Yes," said the other, gently pressing the wasted fingers which lay on the counterpane before him.

"You forgive me, Upton," said he—and the words trembled as he uttered them—"you forgive me, Upton, though I cannot forgive myself."

"My dear friend, a passing moment of impatience is not to breach the friendship of a

lifetime. Your calmer judgment would, I know, not be unjust to me."

"But how am I to repair the wrong I have done you?"

"By never alluding to it—never thinking of it again, Glencore."

"It was so unworthy—so ignoble in me!" cried Glencore, bitterly; and a tear fell over his eyelid and rested on his wan and worn cheek.

"Let us never think of it, my dear Glencore. Life has real troubles enough for either of us, not to dwell on those which we may fashion out of our emotions. I promise you, I have forgotten the whole incident.

Glencore sighed heavily, but did not speak; at last he said, "Be it so, Upton," and, covering his face with his hand, lay still and silent. "Well," said he, after a long pause, "the die is cast, Upton—I have told him!"

"Told the boy?" said Upton.

He nodded an assent. "It is too late to oppose me now, Upton—the thing is done. I didn't think I had strength for it, but re-

venge is a strong stimulant, and I felt as though once more restored to health, as I proceeded. Poor fellow, he bore it like a man. Like a man, do I say? No, but better than man ever bore such crushing tidings. He asked me to stop once, while his head reeled, and said, 'In a minute I shall be myself again.' And so he was, too; you should have seen him, Upton, as he rose to leave me. So much of dignity was there in his look, that my heart misgave me; and I told him that still, as my son, he should never want a friend and a protector. He grew deadly pale, and caught at the bed for support. Another moment and I'd not have answered for myself. I was already relenting —but I thought of *her*, and my resolution came back in all its force. Still I dared not look on him. The sight of that wan cheek, those quivering lips and glassy eyes, would certainly have unmanned me. I turned away. When I looked round he was gone!" As he ceased to speak, a clammy perspiration burst forth over his face and forehead, and he made a sign to Upton to wet his lips.

"It is the last pang she is to cost me,

Upton, but it is a sore one!" said he, in a low, hoarse whisper.

"My dear Glencore, this is all little short of madness; even as revenge it is a failure, since the heaviest share of the penalty recoils upon yourself."

"How so?" cried he, impetuously.

"Is it thus that an ancient name is to go out for ever? Is it in this wise that a house noble for centuries is to crumble into ruin? I will not again urge upon you the cruel wrong you are doing. Over that boy's inheritance you have no more right than over mine—you cannot rob him of the protection of the law. No power could ever give you the disposal of his destiny in this wise."

"I have done it, and I will maintain it, sir," cried Glencore; "and if the question is, as you vaguely hint, to be one of law——"

"No, no, Glencore; do not mistake me."

"Hear me out, sir," said he, passionately. "If it is to be one of law, let Sir Horace Upton give his testimony—tell all that he knows—and let us see what it will avail him. You may—it is quite open to you—place us front to front as enemies. You may teach the boy to regard me as one who has

robbed him of his birthright, and train him up to become my accuser in a court of justice. But my cause is a strong one, it cannot be shaken, and where you hope to brand *me* with tyranny you will but visit bastardy upon *him*. Think twice, then, before you declare this combat. It is one where all your craft will not sustain you."

"My dear Glencore, it is not in this spirit that we can speak profitably to each other. If you will not hear my reasons calmly and dispassionately, to what end am I here? You have long known me as one who lays claim to no more rigid morality than consists with the theory of a worldly man's experiences. I affect no high-flown sentiments. I am as plain and practical as may be; and when I tell you that you are wrong in this affair, I mean to say, that what you are about to do is not only bad, but impolitic. In your pursuit of a victim, you are immolating yourself."

"Be it so; I go not alone to the stake; there is another to partake of the torture," cried Glencore, wildly; and already his flushed cheek and flashing eyes betrayed the approach of a feverish access.

"If I am not to have any influence with you, then," resumed Upton, "I am here to no purpose. If, to all that I say—to arguments you cannot answer—you obstinately persist in opposing an insane thirst for revenge, I see not why you should desire my presence. You have resolved to do this great wrong?"

"It is already done, sir," broke in Glencore.

"Wherein, then, can I be of any service to you?"

"I am coming to that. I had come to it before, had you not interrupted me. I want you to be guardian to the boy. I want you to replace me in all that regards authority over him. You know life well, Upton. You know it not alone in its paths of pleasure and success, but you understand thoroughly the rugged footway over which humble men toil wearily to fortune. None can better estimate a man's chances of success, nor more surely point the road by which he is to attain it. The provision which I destine for him will be an humble one, and he will need to rely upon his own efforts. You will not refuse me this service,

Upton. I ask it in the name of our old friendship."

"There is but one objection I could possibly have, and yet that seems to be insurmountable."

"And what may it be?" cried Glencore.

"Simply, that in acceding to your request, I make myself an accomplice in your plan, and thus aid and abet the very scheme I am repudiating."

"What avails your repudiation if it will not turn me from my resolve? That it will not, I'll swear to you as solemnly as ever an oath was taken. I tell you again, the thing is done. For the consequences which are to follow on it you have no responsibility—these are my concern."

"I should like a little time to think over it," said Upton, with the air of one struggling with irresolution. "Let me have this evening to make up my mind; to-morrow you shall have my answer."

"Be it so, then," said Glencore; and turning his face away, waved a cold farewell with his hand.

We do not purpose to follow Sir Horace as he retired, nor does our task require that

we should pry into the secret recesses of his wily nature; enough if we say that in asking for time, his purpose was rather to afford another opportunity of reflection to Glencore than to give himself more space for deliberation. He had found, by the experience of his calling, that the delay we often crave for, to resolve a doubt, has sufficed to change the mind of him who originated the difficulty.

"I'll give him some hours, at least," thought he, "to ponder over what I have said. Who knows but the argument may seem better in memory than in action? Such things have happened before now." And having finished this reflection, he turned to peruse the pamphlet of a quack doctor who pledged himself to cure all disorders of the circulation by attending to tidal influences, and made the moon herself enter into the *materia medica*. What Sir Horace believed, or did not believe, in the wild rhapsodies of the charlatan, is known only to himself. Whether his credulity was fed by the hope of obtaining relief, or whether his fancy only was aroused by the speculative images thus suggested, it is impossible to say. It is not altogether improbable that he pe-

rused these things as Charles Fox used to read all the trashiest novels of the Minerva Press, and find, in the very distorted and exaggerated pictures, a relief and a relaxation which more correct views of life had failed to impart. Hard-headed men require strange indulgences.

CHAPTER XIV.

BILLY TRAYNOR AND THE COLONEL.

It was a fine breezy morning as the Colonel set out with Billy Traynor for Belmullet. The bridle-path by which they travelled led through a wild and thinly-inhabited tract—now dipping down between grassy hills, now tracing its course along the cliffs over the sea. Tall ferns covered the slopes, protected from the west winds, and here and there little copses of stunted oak showed the traces of what once had been forest. It was, on the whole, a silent and dreary region, so that the travellers felt it even relief as they drew nigh the bright blue sea, and heard the sonorous booming of the waves as they broke along the shore.

"It cheers one to come up out of those

dreary dells, and hear the pleasant plash of the sea," said Harcourt; and his bright face showed that he felt the enjoyment.

"So it does, sir," said Billy. "And yet Homer makes his hero go heavy hearted as he hears the ever sounding sea."

"What does that signify, Doctor?" said Harcourt, impatiently. "Telling me what a character in a fiction feels affects me no more than telling me what he does. Why, man, the one is as unreal as the other. The fellow that created him fashioned his thoughts as well as his actions."

"To be sure he did! but when the fellow is a ganius, what he makes is as much a crayture as either you or myself."

"Come, come, Doctor, no mystification."

"I don't mean any," broke in Billy. "What I want to say is this, that as we read every character to elicit truth—truth in the working of human motives—truth in passion—truth in all the struggles of our poor weak natures—why wouldn't a great ganius like Homer, or Shakspeare, or Milton, be better able to show us this in some picture drawn by themselves, than

you or I be able to find it out for ourselves?"

Harcourt shook his head doubtfully.

"Well, now," said Billy, returning to the charge, "did you ever see a waxwork model of anatomy? Every nerve and siny of a nerve was there—not a vein nor an artery wanting. The artist that made it all just wanted to show you where everything was; but he never wanted you to believe it was alive, or ever had been. But with ganius it's different. He just gives you some traits of a character—he points him out to you passing—just as I would to a man going along the street—and there he is alive for ever and ever; not like you and me, that will be dead and buried to-morrow or next day, and the most known of us three lines in a parish registhry, but he goes down to posterity an example, an illustration—or a warning, maybe—to thousands and thousands of living men. Don't talk to me about fiction! What *he* thought and felt is truer than all that you and I, and a score like us, ever did or ever will do. The creations of ganius are the landmarks of humanity—and

well for us is it that we have such to guide us!"

"All this may be very fine," said Harcourt, contemptuously, "but give *me* the sentiments of a living man, or one that has lived, in preference to all the imaginary characters that have ever adorned a story."

"Just as I suppose that you'd say that a soldier in the Blues, or some big, hulking corporal in the Guards, is a finer model of the human form than ever Praxiteles chiselled."

"I know which I'd rather have along side of me in a charge, Doctor," said Harcourt, laughing; and then to change the topic he pointed to a lone cabin on the seashore, miles away, as it seemed, from all other habitations.

"That's Michel Cady's, sir," said Traynor; "he lives by birds; hunting them saygulls and cormorants through the crevices of the rocks, and stealing the eggs. There isn't a precipice that he won't climb—not a cliff that he won't face."

"Well, if that be his home, the pursuit does not seem a profitable one."

"'Tis as good as braking stones on the

road for fourpence a day, or carrying sea-weed five miles on your back to manure the potatoes," said Billy, mournfully.

"That's exactly the very thing that puzzles me," said Harcourt, "why, in a country so remarkable for fertility, every one should be so miserably poor!"

"And you never heard any explanation of it?"

"Never; at least, never one that satisfied me."

"Nor ever will you," said Billy, sententiously.

"And why so?"

"Because," said he, drawing a long breath, as if preparing for a discourse—"because there's no man capable of going into the whole subject; for it is not merely an economical question or a social one, but it is metaphysical, and religious, and political, and ethnological, and historical — ay, and geographical, too! You have to consider, first, who and what are the aborigines? A conquered people that never gave in they were conquered. Who are the rulers? A Saxon race that always felt that they were infarior to them they ruled over!"

"By Jove, Doctor, I must stop you there; I never heard any acknowledgment of this inferiority you speak of."

"I'd like to get a goold medal for arguin' it out with you," said Billy.

"And, after all, I don't see how it would resolve the original doubt," said Harcourt. "I want to know why the people are so poor, and I don't want to hear of the battle of Clontarf or the Danes at Dundalk."

"There it is, you'd like to narrow down a great question of race, language, traditions, and laws, to a little miserable dispute about labour and wages. Oh, Manchester, Manchester! how ye're in the heart of every Englishman, rich or poor, gentle or simple! You say you never heard of any confession of inferiority. Of course you didn't; but quite the reverse—a very confident sense of being far better than the poor Irish—and I'll tell you how, and why, just as you, yourself, after a discusshion with me, when you find yourself dead bate, and not a word to reply, you'll go home to a good dinner and a bottle of wine, dry clothes and a bright fire; and no matter how hard my argument pushed you, you'll remember that *I'm* in rags, in a

dirty cabin, with potatoes to ate and water to drink, and you'll say, at all events, 'I'm better off than he is;' and there's your superiority, neither more or less—there it is! And all the while, *I'm* saying the same thing to *myself*—'Sorrow matter for his fine broadcloth, and his white linen, and his very best roast beef that he's eatin'—I'm his master! In all that dignifies the spacies in them grand qualities that makes us poets, rhetoricians, and the like, in those elegant attributes that, as the poet says,

> "In all our pursuits
> Lifts us high above brutes,"

in these, I say again, I'm his master!"

As Billy finished his glowing panegyric upon his country and himself, he burst out in a joyous laugh, and cried, "Did ye ever hear conceit like that? Did ye ever expect to see the day that a ragged poor blackguard like *me* would dare to say as much to one like *you;* and, after all, it's the greatest compliment I could pay you."

"How so, Billy—I don't exactly see *that?*"

"Why, that if you weren't a gentleman

—a raal gentleman, born and bred—I could never have ventured to tell you what I said now. It is because, in *your own* refined feelings, you can pardon all the coarseness of *mine*, that I have my safety."

"You're as great a courtier as you are a scholar, Billy," said Harcourt, laughing; "meanwhile, I'm not likely to be enlightened as to the cause of Irish poverty."

"'Tis a whole volume I could write on the same subject," said Billy; "for there's so many causes in operation, combinin,' and assistin', and aggravatin' each other. But if you want the head and front of the mischief in one word, it is this, that no Irishman ever gave his heart and sowl to his own business, but always was mindin' something else that he had nothin' to say to; and so, ye see, the priest does be thinkin' of politics, the parson's thinkin' of the priest, the people are always on the watch for a crack at the agent or the tithe-proctor, and the landlord, instead of looking after his property, is up in Dublin dinin' with the Lord-Leftinint and abusin' his tenants. I don't want to screen myself, nor say I'm better than my neighbours, for though I have a larned profession

to live by, I'd rather be writin' a ballad, and singin' it too, down Thomas-street, than I'd be lecturin' at the Surgeons' Hall."

"You are certainly a very strange people," said Harcourt.

"And yet there's another thing stranger still, which is, that your countrymen never took any advantage of our eccentricities, to rule us by; and if they had any wit in their heads, they'd have seen, easy enough, that all these traits are exactly the clues to a nation's heart. That's what Pitt meant when he said, 'Let me make the *songs* of a people, and I don't care who makes the *laws*.' Look down now in that glen before you, as far as you can see. There's Belmullet, and ain't you glad to be so near your journey's end, for you're mighty tired of all this discoorsin'."

"On the contrary, Billy, even when I disagree with what you say, I'm pleased to hear your reasons; at the same time, I'm glad we are drawing nigh to this poor boy, and I only trust we may not be too late."

Billy muttered a pious concurrence in the wish, and they rode along for some time in silence. "There's the Bay of Belmullet now

under your feet," cried Billy, as he pulled up short, and pointed with his whip seaward. "There's five fathoms, and fine anchoring ground on every inch ye see there. There's elegant shelter from tempestuous winds. There's a coast rich in herrings, oysters, lobsters, and crabs; farther out there's cod, and haddock, and mackerel in the sayson. There's sea wrack for kelp, and every other convanience any one can require, and a poorer set of devils than ye'll see when we get down there, there's nowhere to be found. Well! well! 'if idleness is bliss, it's folly to work hard.'" And with this paraphrase, Billy made way for the Colonel, as the path had now become too narrow for two abreast, and in this way they descended to the shore.

CHAPTER XV.

A SICK BED.

ALTHOUGH the cabin in which the sick boy lay was one of the best in the village, its interior presented a picture of great poverty. It consisted of a single room, in the middle of which a mud wall of a few feet in height formed a sort of partition, abutting against which was the bed—the one bed of the entire family—now devoted to the guest. Two or three coarsely fashioned stools, a rickety table, and a still more rickety dresser, comprised all the furniture. The floor was uneven and fissured, and the solitary window was mended with an old hat, thus diminishing the faint light which struggled through the narrow aperture.

A large net, attached to the rafters, hung down in heavy festoons overhead, the corks

and sinks dangling in dangerous proximity to the heads underneath. Several spars and oars littered one corner, and a newly-painted buoy filled another; but in spite of all these encumbrances, there was space around the fire for a goodly company of some eight or nine of all ages, who were pleasantly eating their supper from a large pot of potatoes that smoked and steamed in front of them.

"God save all here!" cried Billy, as he preceded the Colonel into the cabin.

"Save ye kindly," was the courteous answer, in a chorus of voices; at the same time, seeing a gentleman at the door, the whole party arose at once to receive him. Nothing could have surpassed the perfect good-breeding with which the fisherman and his wife did the honours of their humble home; and Harcourt at once forgot the poverty-struck aspect of the scene in the general courtesy of the welcome.

"He's no better, your honour—no better at all," said the man, as Harcourt drew nigh the sick bed. "He does be always ravin'—ravin' on—beggin' and implorin' that we won't take him back to the Castle; and if he falls asleep, the first thing he says when he

wakes up is, 'Where am I?—tell me I'm not at Glencore!' and he keeps on screechin,' 'Tell me, tell me so!'"

Harcourt bent down over the bed and gazed at him. Slowly and languidly the sick boy raised his heavy lids, and returned the stare.

"You know me, Charley, boy, don't you?" said he, softly.

"Yes," muttered he, in a weak tone.

"Who am I, Charley?—tell me who is speaking to you."

"Yes," said he again.

"Poor fellow!" sighed Harcourt, "he does *not* know me!"

"Where's the pain?" asked Billy, suddenly.

The boy placed his hand on his forehead, and then on his temples.

"Look up! look at *me!*" said Billy. "Ay, there it is! the pupil does not contract — there's mischief in the brain. He wants to say something to you, sir," said he to Harcourt; "he's makin' signs to you to stoop down."

Harcourt put his ear close to the sick boy's lips, and listened.

"No, my dear child, of course not," said he, after a pause. "You shall remain here, and I will stay with you too. In a few days your father will come——".

A wild yell, a shriek that made the cabin ring, now broke from the boy, followed by another, and then a third; and then with a spring he arose from the bed, and tried to escape. Weak and exhausted as he was, such was the strength supplied by fever, it was all that they could do to subdue him and replace him in the bed; violent convulsions followed this severe access, and it was not till after hours of intense suffering that he calmed down again and seemed to slumber.

"There's more than we know of here, Colonel," said Billy, as he drew him to one side. "There's moral causes as well as malady at work."

"There may be, but I know nothing of them," said Harcourt; and in the frank air of the speaker t he other did not hesitate to repose his trust.

"If we hope to save him, we ought to find out where the mischief lies," said Billy, "for, if ye remark, his ravin' is always upon one subject; he never wanders from that."

"He has a dread of home. Some altercation with his father has, doubtless, impressed him with this notion."

"Ah, that isn't enough, we must go deeper; we want a clue to the part of the brain engaged; meanwhile, here's at him, with the antiphlogistic touch;" and he opened his lancet-case, and tucked up his cuffs. "Houlde the basin, Biddy."

"There, Harvey himself couldn't do it nater than that. It's an elegant study to be feelin' a pulse while the blood is flowin'. It comes at first like a dammed-up cataract, a regular outpouring, just as a young girl would tell her love, all wild and tumultuous; then, after a time, she gets more temperate, the feelings are relieved, and the ardour is moderated, till, at last, wearied and worn out, the heart seems to ask for rest; and then, ye'll remark a settled faint smile coming over the lips, and a clammy coldness in the face."

"He's faintin', sir," broke in Biddy.

"He is, ma'am, and it's myself done it," said Billy. "Oh dear, oh dear! If we could only do with the moral heart what we can

with the raal physical one, what wonderful poets we'd be!"

"What hopes have you?" whispered Harcourt.

"The best, the very best. There's youth and a fine constitution to work upon, and what more does a doctor want. As ould Marsden said, 'You can't destroy these in a fortnight, so the patient must live.' But you must help me, Colonel, and you *can* help me."

"Command me in any way, Doctor."

"Here's the 'modus,' then. You must go back to the Castle and find out, if you can, what happened between his father and *him*. It does not signify now, nor will it for some days; but when he comes to the convalescent stage, it's then we'll need to know how to manage him, and what subjects to keep him away from. 'Tis the same with the brain as with a sprained ankle; you may exercise if you don't twist it; but just come down once on the wrong spot, and maybe ye won't yell out!"

"You'll not quit him, then?"

"I'm a senthry on his post, waiting to

get a shot at the enemy if he shows the top of his head. Ah, sir, if ye only knew physic, ye'd acknowledge there's nothing as treacherous as dizaze. Ye hunt him out of the brain, and then he is in the lungs. Ye chase him out of that, and he skulks in the liver. At him there, and he takes to the fibrous membranes, and then its regular hide and go seek all over the body. Trackin' a bear is child's play to it." And so saying, Billy held the Colonel's stirrup for him to mount, and giving his most courteous salutation, and his best wishes for a good journey, he turned and re-entered the cabin.

CHAPTER XVI.

"THE PROJECT."

It was not without surprise that Harcourt saw Glencore enter the drawing-room a few minutes before dinner. Very pale and very feeble, he slowly traversed the room, giving a hand to each of his guests, and answering the inquiries for his health by a sickly smile, while he said, "As you see me."

"I am going to dine with you to-day, Harcourt," said he, with an attempt at gaiety of manner. "Upton tells me that a little exertion of this kind will do me good."

"Upton's right," cried the Colonel, "especially if he added that you should take a glass or two of that admirable Burgundy. My life on't, but that is the liquor to set a man on his legs again."

"I didn't remark that this was exactly

the effect it produced upon you t'other night," said Upton, with one of his own sly laughs.

"That comes of drinking it in bad company," retorted Harcourt; "a man is driven to take two glasses for one."

As the dinner proceeded, Glencore rallied considerably, taking his part in the conversation, and evidently enjoying the curiously-contrasted temperaments at either side of him. The one, all subtlety, refinement, and "finesse;" the other, out-spoken, rude, and true-hearted; rarely correct in a question of taste, but invariably right in every matter of honourable dealing. Though it was clear enough that Upton relished the eccentricities whose sallies he provoked, it was no less easy to see how thoroughly he appreciated the frank and manly nature of the old soldier; nor could all the crafty habits of his acute mind overcome the hearty admiration with which he regarded him.

It is in the unrestricted ease of these "little dinners," where two or three old friends are met, that social intercourse assumes its most charming form. The usages of the great world, which exact a species of

uniformity of breeding and manners, are here laid aside, and men talk with all the bias and prejudices of their true nature, dashing the topics discussed with traits of personality, and even whims that are most amusing. How little do we carry away of tact or wisdom from the grand banquets of life; and what pleasant stores of thought, what charming memories remain to us, after those small gatherings!

How, as I write this, one little room rises to my recollection, with its quaint old side-board of carved oak; its dark-brown cabinets, curiously sculptured; its heavy, old brocade curtains, and all its queer devices of knick-knackery, where such meetings once were held, and where, throwing off the cares of life—shut out from them, as it were, by the massive folds of the heavy drapery across the door—we talked in all the fearless freedom of old friendship, rambling away from theme to theme, contrasting our experiences, balancing our views in life, and mingling through our converse the racy freshness of a boy's enjoyment with the sager counsels of a man's reflectiveness. Alas! how very early is it sometimes in life that we tread "the

banquet-hall deserted." But to our story: the evening wore pleasantly on; Upton talked, as few but himself could do, upon the public questions of the day; and Harcourt, with many a blunt interruption, made the discourse but more easy and amusing. The soldier was, indeed, less at his ease than the others. It was not alone that many of the topics were not such as he was most familiar with, but he felt angry and indignant at Glencore's seeming indifference as to the fate of his son. Not a single reference to him even occurred; his name was never even passingly mentioned. Nothing but the careworn sickly face, the wasted form and dejected expression before him, could have restrained Harcourt from alluding to the boy. He bethought him, however, that any indiscretion on his part might have the gravest consequences. Upton, too, might have said something to quiet Glencore's mind. "At all events, I'll wait," said he to himself; "for wherever there is much delicacy in a negotiation, I generally make a mess of it." The more genially, therefore, did Glencore lend himself to the pleasure of the conversation, the more pro-

voked did Harcourt feel at his heartlessness, and the more did the struggle cost him, to control his own sentiments.

Upton, who detected the secret working of men's minds with a marvellous exactness, saw how the poor Colonel was suffering, and that, in all probability, some unhappy explosion would at last ensue, and took an opportunity of remarking, that though all this chit-chat was delightful for them, Glencore was still a sick man.

"We mustn't forget, Harcourt," said he, "that a chicken-broth diet includes very digestible small-talk; and here we are leading our poor friend through politics, war, diplomacy, and the rest of it, just as if he had the stomach of an old campaigner, and——"

"And the brain of a great diplomatist! Say it out, man, and avow honestly the share of excellence you accord to each of us," broke in Harcourt, laughing.

"I would to Heaven we could exchange," sighed Upton, languidly.

"The saints forbid!" exclaimed the other; "and it would do us little good if we were able."

"Why so?"

"I'd never know what to do with that fine intellect if I had it; and as for *you*, what with your confounded pills and mixtures, your infernal lotions and embrocations, you'd make my sound system as bad as your own in three months' time."

"You are quite wrong, my dear Harcourt; I should treat the stomach as you would do the brain—give it next to nothing to do, in the hopes it might last the longer."

"There now, good night," said Harcourt; "he's always the better for bitters, whether he gives or takes them." And with a good-humoured laugh he left the room.

Glencore's eyes followed him as he retired; and then, as they closed, an expression as of long-repressed suffering settled down on his features, so marked, that Upton hastily asked,

"Are you ill—are you in pain, Glencore?"

"In pain? Yes," said he, "these two hours back I have been suffering intensely; but there's no help for it! Must you really leave this to-morrow, Upton?"

"I must. This letter from the Foreign Office requires my immediate presence in

What if we were to tell him that you were going to marry a daughter of mine? I don't think he'd object, I'm half certain he'd not. I have been abroad these five-and-thirty years. Nobody in England knows much about me now. Old Herrick can't live for ever; he is my senior by a good ten or twelve years; and if the delusion only last his time——'

"'But perhaps you have a daughter?' broke I in.

"'I have, and she is married already, so there is no risk on that score.' I needn't repeat all that he said for, nor that I urged against the project; for though it was after dinner, and we all had drunk very freely, the deception was one I firmly rejected. When a man shows a great desire to serve you on a question of no common difficulty, it is very hard to be severe upon his counsels, however unscrupulous they may be. In fact, you accept them as proofs of friendship only the stronger, seeing how much they must have cost him to offer."

Upton smiled dubiously, and Glencore, blushing slightly, said, "You don't concur in this, I perceive."

"Not exactly," said Upton, in his silkiest of tones; "I rather regard these occasions as I should do the generosity of a man who, filling my hand with base money, should say, 'Pass it if you can!'"

"In this case, however," resumed Glencore, "he took his share of the fraud, or at least was willing to do so, for I distinctly said 'No' to the whole scheme. He grew very warm about it; at one moment appealing to my 'good sense, not to kick seven thousand a year out of the window;' at the next, in half-quarrelsome mood, asking 'if it were any objection I had to be connected with his family.' To get rid of a very troublesome subject, and to end a controversy that threatened to disturb a party, I said at last, 'We'll talk it over to-morrow, Clifford, and if your arguments be as good as your heart, then perhaps they may yet convince me.' This ended the theme, and we parted. I started the next day on a shooting excursion into Calabria, and when I got back it was not of meeting Clifford I was thinking. I hastened to meet the Della Torres, and then came our elopement. You know the rest. We went to the East, passed the winter in

Upper Egypt, and came to Cairo in spring, where Charley was born. I got back to Naples after a year or two, and then found that my uncle had just died, and in consequence of my marrying the daughter of his old and attached friend, Sir Guy Clifford, had reversed the intention of his will, and by a codicil left me his sole heir. It was thus that my marriage, and even my boy's birth became inserted in the Peerage; my solicitor, in his vast eagerness for my interests, having taken care to endorse the story with his own name. The disinherited nephews and nieces, the half-cousins and others, soon got wind of the real facts, and contested the will, on the ground of its being executed under a delusion. I, of course, would not resist their claim, and satisfied myself by denying the statement as to my marriage; and so, after affording the current subject of gossip for a season, I was completely forgotten, the more as we went to live abroad, and never mixed with English. And now, Upton, it is this same incident I would utilise for the present occasion, though, as I said before, when it originally occurred it had a very different signification."

"I don't exactly see how," said Upton.

"In this wise. My real marriage was never inserted in the Peerage. I'll now manage that it shall so appear, to give me the opportunity of formally contradicting it, and alluding to the strange persistence with which, having married me some fifteen years ago to a lady who never existed, they now are pleased to unite me to one whose character might have secured me against the calumny. I'll threaten an action for libel, &c., obtain a most full, explicit, and abject apology, and then, when this has gone the round of all the journals of Europe, her doom is sealed!"

"But she has surely letters, writings, proofs of some sort."

"No, Upton, I have not left a scrap in her possession; she has not a line, not a letter to vindicate her. On the night I broke open her writing-desk, I took away everything that bore the traces of my own hand. I tell you again she is in my power, and never was power less disposed to mercy."

"Once more, my dear friend," said Upton, "I am driven to tell you that I cannot be a

profitable counsellor in a matter to every detail of which I object. Consider calmly for one moment what you are doing. See how in your desire to be avenged upon *her* you throw the heaviest share of the penalty on your own poor boy. I am not her advocate now. I will not say one word to mitigate the course of your anger towards her, but remember that you are actually defrauding him of his birthright. This is not a question where you have a choice. There is no discretionary power left you."

"I'll do it," said Glencore, with a savage energy.

"In other words, to wreak a vengeance upon one, you are prepared to immolate another, not only guiltless, but who possesses every claim to your love and affection."

"And do you think that if I sacrifice the last tie that attaches me to life, Upton, that I retire from this contest heart-whole? No, far from it; I go forth from the struggle broken, blasted, friendless!"

"And do you mean that this vengeance should outlive you? Suppose, for instance, that she should survive you."

"It shall be to live on in shame, then," cried he, savagely.

"And were she to die first?"

"In that case—I have not thought well enough about that. It is possible—it is just possible; but these are subtleties, Upton, to detach me from my purpose, or weaken my resolution to carry it through. You would apply the craft of your calling to the case, and by suggesting emergencies, open a road to evasions. Enough for me the present. I neither care to prejudge the future, nor control it. I know," cried he, suddenly, and with eyes flashing angrily as he spoke—"I know that if you desire to use the confidence I have reposed in you against me, you can give me trouble and even difficulty, but I defy Sir Horace Upton, with all his skill and all his cunning, to outwit me."

There was that in the tone in which he uttered these words, and the exaggerated energy of his manner, that convinced Upton Glencore's reason was not intact. It was not what could amount to aberration in the ordinary sense, but sufficient evidence was there to show that judgment had become so

obscured by passion, that the mental power was weakened with the moral.

"Tell me, therefore, Upton," cried he, "before we part, do you leave this house my friend or my enemy?"

"It is as your sincere, attached friend that I now dispute with you, inch by inch, a dangerous position, with a judgment under no influence from passion, viewing this question by the coldest of all tests—mere expediency ——"

"There it is," broke in Glencore; "you claim an advantage over me, because you are devoid of feeling; but this is a case, sir, where the sense of injury gives the instinct of reparation. Is it nothing to me, think you, that I am content to go down dishonoured to my grave, but also to be the last of my name and station? Is it nothing that a whole line of honourable ancestry is extinguished at once? Is it nothing, that I surrender him who formed my sole solace and companionship in life? You talk of your calm, unbiassed mind; but I tell you, till your brain be on fire like mine, and your heart swollen to very bursting, that

you have no right to dictate to *me!* Besides, it is done! The blow has fallen," added he, with a deeper solemnity of voice. "The gulf that separates us is already created. She and I can meet no more. But why continue this contest? It was to aid me in directing that boy's fortunes I first sought your advice, not to attempt to dissuade me from what I will not be turned from."

"In what way can I serve you?" said Upton, calmly.

"Will you consent to be his guardian?"

"I will."

Glencore seized the other's hand, and pressed it to his heart, and for some seconds he could not speak.

"This is all that I ask, Upton," said he. "It is the greatest boon friendship could accord me. I need no more. Could you have remained here a day or two more, we could have settled upon some plan together as to his future life; as it is, we can arrange it by letter."

"He must leave this," said Upton, thoughtfully.

"Of course—at once!"

"How far is Harcourt to be informed in this matter—have you spoken to him already?"

"No; nor mean to do so. I should have from *him* nothing but reproaches for having betrayed the boy into false hopes of a station he was never to fill. You must tell Harcourt. I leave it to yourself to find the suitable moment."

"We shall need his assistance," said Upton, whose quick faculties were already busily travelling many a mile of the future. "I'll see him to-night, and try what can be done. In a few days you will have turned over in your mind what you yourself destine for him—the fortune you mean to give——"

"It is already done," said Glencore, laying a sealed letter on the table. "All that I purpose in his behalf you will find there."

"All this detail is too much for you, Glencore," said the other, seeing that a weary, depressed expression had come over him, while his voice grew weaker with every word. "I shall not leave this till late to-morrow, so that we can meet again. And now, good night."

CHAPTER XVII.

A TETE-A-TETE.

When Harcourt was aroused from his sound sleep by Upton, and requested in the very blandest tones of that eminent diplomatist to lend him every attention of his "very remarkable faculties," he was not by any means certain that he was not engaged in a strange dream; nor was the suspicion at all dispelled by the revelations addressed to him.

"Just dip the end of that towel in the water, Upton, and give it to me," cried he at last; and then wiping his face and forehead, said, "Have I heard you aright—there was no marriage?"

Upton nodded assent.

"What a shameful way he has treated

this poor boy, then," cried the other. "I never heard of anything equal to it in cruelty, and I conclude it was breaking this news to the lad that drove him out to sea on that night, and brought on this brain fever. By Jove, I'd not take *his* title, and *your* brains, to have such a sin on my conscience!"

"We are happily not called on to judge the act," said Upton, cautiously.

"And why not? Is it not every honest man's duty to reprobate whatever he detects dishonourable or disgraceful? I do judge him, and sentence him, too, and I say, moreover, that a more cold-blooded piece of cruelty I never heard of. He trains up this poor boy from childhood to fancy himself the heir to his station and fortune—he nurses in him all the pride that only a high rank can cover, and then, when the lad's years have brought him to the period when these things assume all their value, he sends for him to tell him he is a bastard."

"It is not impossible that I think worse of Glencore's conduct than you do yourself," said Upton, gravely.

"But you never told him so, I'll be

sworn—you never said to him it was a rascally action. I'll lay a hundred pounds on it, you only expostulated on the inexpediency, or the inconvenience, or some such trumpery consideration, and did not tell him, in round numbers, that what he had done was an infamy."

"Then I fancy you'd lose your money, pretty much as you are losing your temper—that is, without getting anything in requital."

"What did you say to him, then?" said Harcourt, slightly abashed.

"A great deal in the same strain as you have just spoken in, doubtless not as warm in vituperation, but possibly as likely to produce an effect; nor is it in the least necessary to dwell upon that. What Glencore has done, and what I have said about it, both belong to the past. They are over—they are irrevocable. It is to what concerns the present and the future I wish now to address myself, and to interest you."

"Why, the boy's name was in the Peerage—I read it there myself."

"My dear Harcourt, you must have paid very little attention to me a while ago, or

you would have understood how that occurred."

"And here were all the people, the tenantry on the estate, calling him the young lord, and the poor fellow growing up with the proud consciousness that the title was his due."

"There is not a hardship of the case I have not pictured to my own mind as forcibly as you can describe it," said Upton, "but I really do not perceive that any reprobation of the past has in the slightest assisted me in providing for the future."

"And then," murmured Harcourt, for all the while he was pursuing his own train of thought, quite irrespective of all Upton was saying—"and then he turns him adrift on the world without friend or fortune."

"It is precisely that he may have both the one and the other that I have come to confer with you now," replied Upton. "Glencore has made a liberal provision for the boy, and asked me to become his guardian. I have no fancy for the trust, but I didn't see how I could decline it. In this letter he assigns to him an income, which

shall be legally secured to him. He commits to *me* the task of directing his education, and suggesting some future career; and for both these objects I want your counsel."

"Education—prospects—why, what are you talking about? A poor fellow who has not a name, nor a home, nor one to acknowledge him; what need has he of education, or what chance of prospects? I'd send him to sea, and if he wasn't drowned before he came to manhood, I'd give him his fortune, whatever it was, and say, 'Go settle in some of the colonies.' You have no right to train him up, to meet fresh mortifications and insults in life—to be flouted by every fellow that has a father, and outraged by every cur whose mother was married."

"And are the colonies especially inhabited by illegitimate offspring?" said Upton, dryly.

"At least he'd not be met with a rebuff at every step he made. The rude life of toil would be better than the polish of a civilisation that could only reflect upon him."

"Not badly said, Harcourt," said Upton, smiling; "but as to the boy, I have other

prospects. He has, if I mistake not, very good faculties. You estimate them even higher. I don't see why they should be neglected. If he merely possess the mediocrity of gifts which make men tolerable lawyers and safe doctors, why, perhaps, he may turn them into some channel. If he really can lay claim to higher qualities, they must not be thrown away."

"Which means, that he ought to be bred up to diplomacy," said Harcourt.

"Perhaps," said the other, with a bland inclination of the head.

"And what can an old dragoon like myself contribute to such an object?" asked Harcourt.

"You can be of infinite service in many ways," said Upton, "and for the present I wish to leave the boy in your care till I can learn something about my own destiny. This, of course, I shall know in a few days. Meanwhile you'll look after him, and, as soon as his removal becomes safe, you'll take him away from this, it does not much matter whither; probably some healthy, secluded spot in Wales, for a week or two, would be advisable. Glencore and he must not meet

again; if ever they are to do so, it must be after a considerable lapse of time."

"Have you thought of a name for him, or is his to be still Massy?" asked Harcourt, bluntly.

"He may take the maternal name of Glencore's family, and be called Doyle, and the settlements could be drawn up in that name."

"I'll be shot if I like to have any share in the whole transaction! Some day or other it will all come out, and who knows how much blame may be imputed to us, perhaps for actually advising the entire scheme," said Harcourt.

"You must see, my dear Harcourt, that you are only refusing aid to alleviate an evil, and not to devise one. If this boy——"

"Well—well—I give in. I'd rather comply at once than be preached into acquiescence. Even when you do not convince me, I feel ashamed to oppose myself to so much cleverness; so, I repeat, I'm at your orders."

"Admirably spoken," said Upton, with a smile.

"My greatest difficulty of all," said Har-

court, "will be to meet Glencore again after all this. I know—I feel—I never can forgive him."

"Perhaps he will not ask forgiveness, Harcourt," said the other, with one of his slyest of looks. "Glencore is a strange self-opinionated fellow, and has amongst other odd notions that of going the road he likes best himself. Besides, there is another consideration here, and, with no man will it weigh more than with yourself. Glencore has been dangerously ill—at this moment we can scarcely say that he has recovered—his state is yet one of anxiety and doubt. You are the last who would forget such infirmity; nor is it necessary to secure your pity, that I should say how seriously the poor fellow is now suffering."

"I trust he'll not speak to me about this business," said Harcourt, after a pause.

"Very probably he will not. He will know that I have already told you everything, so that there will be no need of any communication from him."

"I wish from my heart and soul I had never come here. I would to Heaven I had gone away at once, as I first intended. I

like that boy, I feel he has fine stuff in him, and now——"

"Come, come, Harcourt, it's the fault of all soft-hearted fellows, like yourself—that their kindliness degenerates into selfishness, and they have such a regard for their own feelings, that they never agree to anything that wounds them. Just remember that you and I have very small parts in this drama, and the best way we can do is to fill them without giving ourselves the airs of chief characters."

"You're at your old game, Upton; you are always ready to wet yourself, provided you give another fellow a ducking."

"Only if he get a worse one, or take longer to dry after it," remarked Upton, laughing.

"Quite true, by Jove!" chimed in the other; "you take special care to come off best. And now you're going," added he, as Upton rose to withdraw, "and I'm certain that I have not half comprehended what you want from me."

"You shall have it in writing, Harcourt; I'll send you a clear despatch the first spare moment I can command after I reach town.

The boy will not be fit to move for some time to come, and so good-by."

"You don't know where they are going to send you?"

"I cannot frame even a conjecture," sighed Upton, languidly. "I ought to be in the Brazils for a week or so about that slave question; and then the sooner I reach Constantinople the better."

"Shan't they want you at Paris?" asked Harcourt, who felt a kind of quiet vengeance in developing what he deemed the weak vanity of the other.

"Yes," sighed he again, "but I can't be everywhere." And so saying, he lounged away, while it would have taken a far more subtle listener than Harcourt to say whether he was mystifying the other, or the dupe of his own self-esteem.

CHAPTER XVIII.

BILLY TRAYNOR, AS ORATOR.

THREE weeks rolled over: an interval not without its share of interest for the inhabitants of the little village of Leenane, since on one morning Mr. Craggs had made his appearance on his way to Clifden, and after an absence of two days returned to the Castle. The subject for popular discussion and surmise had not yet declined, when a boat was seen to leave Glencore, heavily laden with trunks and travelling gear, and as she neared the land, the "lord" was detected amongst the passengers; looking very ill — almost dying; he passed up the little street of the village, scarcely noticing the uncovered heads which saluted him respectfully. Indeed, he scarcely lifted up his eyes, and as the acute observers remarked, never once turned a

glance towards the opposite shore where the Castle stood.

He had not reached the end of the village, when a chaise with four horses arrived at the spot. No time was lost in arranging the trunks and portmanteaus, and Lord Glencore sat moodily on a bank, listlessly regarding what went forward. At length Craggs came up, and touching his cap in military fashion, announced all was ready.

Lord Glencore arose slowly, and looked languidly around him; his features wore a mingled expression of weariness and anxiety, like one not fully awakened from an oppressive dream. He turned his eyes on the people, who at a respectful distance stood around, and in a voice of peculiar melancholy said, "Good-by."

"A good journey to you, my lord, and safe back again to us," cried a number together.

"Eh—what—what was that?" cried he, suddenly, and the tones were shrill and discordant in which he spoke.

A warning gesture from Craggs imposed silence on the crowd, and not a word was uttered.

"I thought they said something about coming back again," muttered Glencore, gloomily.

"They were wishing you a good journey, my lord," replied Craggs.

"Oh, that was it, was it?" And so saying, with bent-down head he walked feebly forward and entered the carriage. Craggs was speedily on the box, and the next moment they were away.

It is no part of our task to dwell on the sage speculations and wise surmises of the village on this event. They had not, it is true, much "evidence" before them, but they were hardy guessers, and there was very little within the limits of possibility which they did not summon to the aid of their imaginations. All, however, were tolerably agreed upon one point—that to leave the place, while the young lord was still unable to quit his bed and too weak to sit up, was unnatural and unfeeling; traits which, "after all," they thought "not very surprising, since the likes of them lords never cared for anybody."

Colonel Harcourt still remained at Glencore, and under his rigid sway the strictest

blockade of the coast was maintained, nor was any intercourse whatever permitted with the village. A boat from the Castle, meeting another from Leenane, half way in the lough, received the letters and whatever other resources the village supplied. All was done with the rigid exactness of a quarantine regulation, and if the mainland had been scourged with plague, stricter measures of exclusion could scarcely have been enforced.

In comparison with the present occupant of the Castle, the late one was a model of amiability; and the village, as is the wont in the case, now discovered a vast number of good qualities in the "lord," when they had lost him. After a while, however, the guesses, the speculations, and the comparisons all died away, and the Castle of Glencore was as much dreamland to their imaginations, as, seen across the lough in the dim twilight of an evening in autumn, its towers might have appeared to their eyes.

It was about a month after Lord Glencore's departure, of a fine, soft evening in summer, Billy Traynor suddenly appeared in the village. Billy was one of a class who,

whatever their rank in life, are always what Coleridge would have called "noticeable men." He was soon, therefore, surrounded with a knot of eager and inquiring friends, all solicitous to know something of the life he was leading; what they were doing "beyant at the Castle."

"It's a mighty quiet studious kind of life," said Billy, "but agrees with me wonderfully; for I may say that until now I never was able to give my 'janius' fair play. Professional life is the ruin of the student; and being always obleeged to be thinkin' of the bags destroyed my taste for letters." A grin of self-approval at his own witticism closed this speech.

"But is it true, Billy, the lord is going to break up house entirely, and not come back here?" asked Peter Slevin, the sacristan, whose rank and station warranted his assuming the task of cross-questioner.

"There's various ways of breakin' up a house," said Billy; "ye may do so in a moral sinse, or in a physical sinse; you may obliterate, or extinguish, or, without going so far, you may simply obfuscate—do you perceave?"

"Yes!" said the sacristan, on whom every eye was now bent, to see if he was able to follow subtleties that had outwitted the rest.

"And whin I say *obfuscate*," resumed Billy, "I open a question of disputed etymology, bekase tho' Lucretius thinks the word *obfuscator*, original, there's many supposes it comes from *ob*, and *fucus*, the dye the ancients used in their wool, as we find in Horace, *lana fuco medicata;* while Cicero employs it in another sense, and says, *facere fucum*, which is as much as to say, humbuggin' somebody—do ye mind?"

"Begorra, he might guess that anyhow!" muttered a shrewd little tailor, with a significance that provoked hearty laughter.

"And now," continued Billy, with an air of triumph, "we'll proceed to the next point."

"Ye needn't trouble yerself then," said Terry Lynch, "for Peter has gone home."

And so, to the amusement of the meeting, it turned out to be the case; the sacristan had retired from the controversy. "Come in here to Mrs. Moore's, Billy, and take a

glass with us," said Terry; "it isn't often we see you in these parts."

"If the honourable company will graciously vouchsafe and condescind to let me trate them to a half-gallon," said Billy, "it will be the proudest event of my terrestrial existence."

The proposition was received with a cordial enthusiasm, flattering to all concerned; and in a few minutes after, Billy Traynor sat at the head of a long table in the neat parlour of "The Griddle," with a company of some fifteen or sixteen very convivially-disposed friends around him.

"If I was Cæsar, or Lucretius, or Nebuchadnezzar, I couldn't be prouder," said Billy, as he looked down the board. "And let moralists talk as they will, there's a beautiful expansion of sentiment—there's a fine genial overflowin' of the heart in gatherins like this, where we mingle our feelins and our philosophy; and our love and our learning walk hand in hand like brothers—pass the sperits, Mr. Shea. If we look to the ancient writers, what do we see? Lemons! bring in some lemons, Mickey. What do we

see, I say, but that the very highest enjoyment of the haythen gods was—hot wather! why won't they send in more hot wather!"

"Begorra, if I was a haythen god, I'd like a little whisky in it," muttered Terry, dryly.

"Where was I?" asked Billy, a little disconcerted by this sally, and the laugh it excited. "I was expatiatin' upon celestial convivialities. The *noctes cœnæque deum*—them elegant hospitalities, where wisdom was moistened with nectar, and wit washed down with ambrosia. It is not, by coorse, to be expected," continued he, modestly, "that we mere mortials can compete with them elegant refections. But, as Ovid says, we can at least *diem jucundam decipere*."

The unknown tongue had now restored to Billy all the reverence and respect of his auditory, and he continued to expatiate very eloquently on the wholesome advantages to be derived from convivial intercourse, both amongst gods and men; rather slyly intimating that either on the score of the fluids, or the conversation, his own leanings lay towards "the humanities." "For, after all," said he, "'tis our own wakenesses is often the

source of our most refined enjoyments. No, Mrs. Cassidy, ye needn't be blushin'. I'm considerin' my subject in a high ethnological and metaphysical sinse." Mrs. Cassidy's confusion, and the mirth it excited, here interrupted the orator.

"The meetin' is never tired of hearin' you, Billy," said Terry Lynch; "but if it was plazin' to ye to give us a song, we'd enjoy it greatly."

"Ah!" said Billy, with a sigh, "I have taken my partin' kiss with the Muses—*non mihi licet increpare digitis lyram:*

> "'No more to feel poetic fire,
> No more to touch the soundin' lyre;
> But wiser coorses to begin,
> I now forsake my violin.'"

An honest outburst of regret and sorrow broke from the assembly, who eagerly pressed for an explanation of this calamitous change.

"The thing is this," said Billy, "if a man is a creature of mere leisure and amusement, the fine arts—and by the fine arts I mean music, paintin', and the ladies—is an elegant and very refined subject of cultivation; but when you raise your cerebrial faculties to

grander and loftier considerations, to explore the difficult ragions of polemic or political truth, to investigate the subtleties of the schools, and penetrate the mysteries of science, then, take my word for it, the fine arts is just snares—devil a more than snares! And whether it is soft sounds seduces you, or elegant tints, or the union of both—women I mane—you'll never arrive at anything great or tri-um-phant till you wane yourself away from the likes of them vanities. Look at the haythen mythology; consider for a moment who is the chap that represents music—a lame blackguard, with an ugly face, they call Pan. Ay, indeed, Pan! If you wanted to see what respect they had for the art, it's easy enough to guess, when this crayture represints it; and as to 'paintin',' on my conscience, they haven't a god at all that ever took to the brush. Pass up the sperits, Mickey," said he, somewhat blown and out of breath by this effort; "maybe," said he, "I'm wearin' you."

"No, no, no," loudly responded the meeting.

"Maybe I'm imposin' too much of per-

sonal details on the house," added he, pompously.

"Not at all; never a bit," cried the company.

"Because," resumed he, slowly, "if I did so, I'd have at least the excuse of sayin', like the great Pitt, 'These may be my last words from this place.'"

An unfeigned murmur of sorrow ran through the meeting, and he resumed:

"Ay, ladies and gintlemin, Billy Traynor is taking his 'farewell benefit;' he's not humbuggin'; I'm not like them chaps that's always positively goin', but stays on at the unanimous request of the whole world. No; I'm really goin' to leave you."

"What for? Where to, Billy?" broke from a number of voices together.

"I'll tell ye," said he; "at least so far as I can tell; because it wouldn't be right nor decent to 'print the whole of the papers for the house,' as they say in parliamint. I'm going abroad with the young lord; we are going to improve our minds, and cultivate our janiuses, by study and foreign travel. We are first to settle in Germany, where we're to enter a University, and commince a

coorse of modern tongues, French, Sweadish, and Spanish; imbibin' at the same time a smatterin' of science, such as chemistry, conchology, and the use of the globes."

"Oh dear! oh dear!" murmured the meeting in wonder and admiration.

"I'm not goin' to say that we'll neglect mechanics, metaphysics, and astrology: for we mane to be cosmonopolists in knowledge. As for myself, ladies and gintlemin, it's a proud day that sees me standin' here to say these words. I, that was ragged, without a shoe to my foot—without breeches—never mind, I was, as the poet says, *nudus nummis ac vestimentis*—

> "'I haven't sixpence in my pack,
> I haven't small clothes to my back,'

carryin' the bag many a weary mile, through sleet and snow, for six pounds tin per annum, and no pinsion for wounds or superannuation; and now I'm to be—it isn't easy to say what—to the young lord, a spacies of humble companion, not manial, do you mind, nothing manial. What the Latins called a *famulus*, which was quite a different thing from a *servus*. The former

bein' a kind of domestic adviser, a deputy-assistant, monitor-general, as a body might say. There now, if I discoorsed for a month, I couldn't tell you more about myself and my future prospects. I own to you, that I am proud of my good luck; and I wouldn't exchange it to be Emperor of Jamaica, or King of the Bahamia Islands."

If we have been prolix in our office of reporter to Billy Traynor, our excuse is, that his discourse will have contributed so far to the reader's enlightenment as to save us the task of recapitulation. At the same time, it is but justice to the accomplished orator that we should say, we have given but the most meagre outline of an address, which, to use the newspaper phrase, "occupied three hours in the delivery." The truth was, Billy was in vein; the listeners were patient, the punch strong; nor is it every speaker who has the good fortune of such happy accessories.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE CASCINE AT FLORENCE.

It was spring, and in Italy; one of those half-dozen days at very most, when, the feeling of winter departed, a gentle freshness breathes through the air; trees stir softly, and as if by magic; the earth becomes carpeted with flowers, whose odours seem to temper, as it were, the exciting atmosphere. An occasional cloud, fleecy and jagged, sails lazily aloft, marking its shadow on the mountain side. In a few days—a few hours perhaps—the blue sky will be unbroken, the air hushed, a hot breath will move among the leaves, or pant over the trickling fountain.

In this fast-flitting period—we dare not call it season—the Cascine of Florence is singularly beautiful: on one side, the gentle river stealing past beneath the shadowing

foliage; on the other, the picturesque mountain towards Fiesole, dotted with its palaces and terraced gardens. The ancient city itself is partly seen, and the massive Duomo and the Palazzo Vecchio tower proudly above the trees! What other people of Europe have such a haunt?—what other people would know so thoroughly how to enjoy it? The day was drawing to a close, and the Piazzone was now filled with equipages. There were the representatives of every European people, and of nations far away over the seas—splendid Russians, brilliant French, splenetic, supercilious English, and ponderous Germans, mingled with the less marked nationalities of Belgium and Holland, and even America. Everything that called itself Fashion was there to swell the tide; and although a choice military band was performing with exquisite skill the favourite overtures of the day, the noise and tumult of conversation almost drowned their notes. Now, the Cascine is to the world of society what the Bourse is to the world of trade. It is the great centre of all news and intelligence, where markets and bargains of intercourse are transacted, and where the

scene of past pleasure is revived, and the plans of future enjoyment are canvassed. The great and the wealthy are there, to see and to meet with each other. Their proud equipages lie side by side, like great liners; while phaetons, like fast frigates, shoot swiftly by, and solitary dandies flit past in varieties of conveyance to which sea-craft can offer no analogies. All are busy, eager, and occupied. Scandal holds here its festival, and the misdeeds of every capital of Europe are now being discussed. The higher themes of politics occupy but few; the interests of literature attract still less. It is essentially of the world they talk, and it must be owned they do it like adepts. The last witticism of Paris—the last duel at Berlin—who has fled from his creditors in England—who has run away from her husband at Naples—are all retailed with a serious circumstantiality that would lead one to believe that gossip maintained its 'own correspondent' in every city of the Continent. Moralists might fancy, perhaps, that in the tone these subjects are treated, there would mingle a reprobation of the bad, and a due estimate of the opposite, if it ever occurred at all; but

as surely would they be disappointed. Never were censors more lenient—never were critics so charitable. The transgressions against good breeding—the "gaucheries" of manner—the solecisms in dress, language, or demeanour, do indeed meet with sharp reproof and cutting sarcasm; but in recompense for such severity, how gently do they deal with graver offences. For the felonies they can always discover "the attenuating circumstances;" for the petty larcenies of fashion they have nothing but whipcord.

Amidst the various knots where such discussions were carried on, one was eminently conspicuous. It was around a handsome, open carriage, whose horses, harnessing, and liveries were all in the most perfect taste. The equipage might possibly have been deemed showy in Hyde Park; but in the Bois de Boulogne, or the Cascine, it must be pronounced the acme of elegance. Whatever might have been the differences of national opinion on this point, there could assuredly have been none as to the beauty of those who occupied it.

Though a considerable interval of years divided them, the aunt and her niece had a

wonderful resemblance to each other. They were both—that rarest of all forms of beauty —blond Italians; that is, with light hair, and soft, grey eyes. They had a peculiar tint of skin, deeper and mellower than we see in northern lands, and an expression of mingled seriousness and softness that only pertains to the south of Europe. There was a certain coquetry in the similarity of their dress, which in many parts was precisely alike; and although the niece was but fifteen, and the aunt above thirty, it needed not the aid of flattery to make many mistake one for the other.

Beauty, like all the other "Beaux Arts," has its distinctions. The same public opinion that enthrones the sculptor or the musician, confers its crown on female loveliness; and by this acclaim were they declared Queens of Beauty. To any one visiting Italy for the first time, there would have seemed something very strange in the sort of homage rendered them: a reverence and respect only accorded elsewhere to royalties—a deference that verged on actual humiliation —and yet all this blended with a subtle

familiarity that none but an Italian can ever attain to. The uncovered head, the attitude of respectful attention, the patient expectancy of notice, the glad air of him under recognition, were all there; and yet, through these, there was dashed a strange tone of intimacy, as though the observances were but a thin crust over deeper feelings. "La Contessa"—for she was especially "the Countess," as one illustrious man of our own country was "the Duke"—possessed every gift which claims pre-eminence in this fair city. She was eminently beautiful, young, charming in her manners, with ample fortune; and, lastly—ah! good reader, you would surely be puzzled to supply that lastly, the more as we say that in it lies an excellence without which all the rest are of little worth, and yet with it are objects of worship, almost of adoration—she was—separated from her husband! There must have been an epidemic, a kind of rot among husbands at one period; for we scarcely remember a very pretty woman, from five-and-twenty to five-and-thirty, who had not been obliged to leave hers from acts of

cruelty, or acts of brutality, &c., that only husbands are capable of, or of which their poor wives are ever the victims.

If the moral geography of Europe be ever written, the region south of the Alps will certainly be coloured with that tint, whatever it be, that describes the blessedness of a divorced existence. In other lands, especially in our own, the separated individual labours under no common difficulty in his advances to society. The story—there must be a story—of his separation is told in various ways, all of course to his disparagement. Tyrant or victim, it is hard to say under which title he comes out best—so much for the man; but for the woman there is no plea; judgment is pronounced at once without the merits. Fugitive, or fled from —who inquires? she is one that few men dare to recognise. The very fact that to mention her name exacts an explanation, is condemnatory. What a boon to all such must it be that there is a climate mild enough for their malady, and a country that will suit their constitution; and not only that, but a region which actually pays homage to their infirmity, and makes of

their martyrdom a triumph! As you go to Norway for salmon fishing—to Bengal to hunt tigers — to St. Petersburg to eat caviare, so when divorced, if you would really know the blessing of your state, go take a house on the Arno. Vast as are the material resources of our globe, the moral ones are infinitely greater; nor need we despair, some day or other, of finding an island where a certificate of fraudulent bankruptcy will be deemed a letter of credit, and an evidence of insolvency be accepted as qualification to open a bank.

La Contessa inhabited a splendid palace, furnished with magnificence; her gardens were one of the sights of the capital, not only for their floral display, but that they contained a celebrated group by Canova, of which no copy existed. Her gallery was, if not extensive, enriched with some priceless treasures of art; and with all these she possessed high rank, for her card bore the name of La Comtesse de Glencore, née Comtesse della Torre.

The reader thus knows at once, if not actually as much as we do ourselves, all that we mean to impart to him: and now let us

come back to that equipage around which swarmed the fashion of Florence, eagerly pressing forward to catch a word, a smile, or even a look; and actually perched on every spot from which they could obtain a glimpse of those within. A young Russian Prince, with his arm in a sling, had just recited the incident of his late duel; a Neapolitan Minister had delivered a rose-coloured epistle from a Royal Highness of his own court. A Spanish Grandee had deposited his offering of camelias, which actually covered the front cushions of the carriage; and now a little lane was formed for the approach of the old Duke de Brignolles, who made his advance with a mingled courtesy and haughtiness that told of Versailles and long ago.

A very creditable specimen of the old noblesse of France was the Duke, and well worthy to be the grandson of one who was Grand Maréchal to Louis XIV. Tall, thin, and slightly stooped from age, his dark eye seemed to glisten the brighter beneath his shaggy white eyebrows. He had served with distinction as a soldier, and been an ambassador at the court of the Czar Paul; in every station he had filled sustaining the

character of a true and loyal gentleman—a man who could reflect nothing but honour upon the great country he belonged to. It was amongst the scandal of Florence that he was the most devoted of La Contessa's admirers ; but we are quite willing to believe that his admiration had nothing in it of love. At all events, she distinguished him by her most marked notice. He was the frequent guest of her choicest dinners, and the constant visitor at her evenings at home. It was, then, with a degree of favour that many an envious heart coveted, she extended her hand to him as he came forward, which he kissed with all the lowly deference he would have shown to that of his prince.

"Mon cher Duc," said she, smiling, "I have such a store of grievances to lay at your door. The essence of violets is not violets but verbena."

"Charming Comtesse, I had it direct from Pierrot's."

"Pierrot is a traitor, then, that's all: and where's Ida's Arab, is he to be here to-day, or to-morrow? When are we to see him?"

"Why, I only wrote to the Emir on Tuesday last."

"Mais a quoi bon l'Emir if he can't do impossibilities? Surely the very thought of him brings up the Arabian Nights, and the Calif Haroun. By the way, thank you for the poignard. It is true Damascus, is it not?"

"Of course. I'd not have dared——"

"To be sure not. I told the Archduchess it was. I wore it in my Turkish dress on Wednesday, and you, false man, wouldn't come to admire me!"

"You know what a sad day was that for me, madam," said he, solemnly. "It was the anniversary of her fate who was your only rival in beauty, as she had no rival in undeserved misfortunes."

"Pauvre Reine!" sighed the Countess, and held her bouquet to her face.

"What great mass of papers is that you have there, Duke?" resumed she. "Can it be a journal?"

"It is an English newspaper, my dear Countess. As I know you do not receive any of his countrymen, I have not asked your permission to present the Lord Selby;

but hearing him read out your name in a paragraph here, I carried off his paper to have it translated for me. You read English, don't you?"

"Very imperfectly; and I detest it," said she, impatiently; "but Prince Volkoffsky can, I am sure, oblige you." And she turned away her head in ill-humour.

"It is here somewhere. *Parbleu*, I thought I marked the place," muttered the Duke, as he handed the paper to the Russian. "Isn't that it?"

"This is all about theatres, Madame Pasta, and the Haymarket."

"Ah! well, it is lower down: here, perhaps."

"Court news. The Grand Duke of Saxe Weimar."

"No, no; not that."

"Oh, here it is. 'Great Scandal in High Life.—A very singular correspondence has just passed, and will soon, we believe, be made public, between the Heralds' College and Lord Glencore.'" Here the reader stopped, and lowered his voice at the next word.

"Read on, Prince. *C'est mon mari*,"

said she, coldly, while a very slight movement of her upper lip betrayed what might mean scorn or sorrow, or even both.

The Prince, however, had now run his eyes over the paragraph, and crushing the newspaper in his hand, hurried away from the spot. The Duke as quickly followed, and soon overtook him.

"Who gave you this paper, Duke?" cried the Russian, angrily.

"It was Lord Selby. He was reading it aloud to a friend."

"Then he is an *Infame!* and I'll tell him so," cried the other, passionately. "Which is he? the one with the light moustache, or the shorter one?" And, without waiting for reply, the Russian dashed between the carriages, and thrusting his way through the prancing crowd of moving horses, arrived at a spot where two young men, evidently strangers to the scene, were standing calmly surveying the bright panorama before them.

"The Lord Selby," said the Russian, taking off his hat and saluting one of them.

"That's his lordship," replied the one he addressed, pointing to his friend.

"I am the Prince Volkoffsky, Aide-de-Camp to the Emperor," said the Russian; "and hearing from my friend, the Duke de Brignolles, that you have just given him this newspaper, that he might obtain the translation of a passage in it which concerns Lady Glencore, and have the explanation read out at her own carriage, publicly, before all the world, I desire to tell you that your lordship is unworthy of your rank—that you are an *infame!* and if you do not resent this—a *polisson!*"

"This man is mad, Selby," said the short man, with the coolest air imaginable.

"Quite sane enough to give your friend a lesson in good manners; and you too, sir, if you have any fancy for it," said the Russian.

"I'd give him in charge to the police, by Jove, if there were police here," said the same one who spoke before: "he can't be a gentleman."

"There's my card, sir," said the Russian; "and for you too, sir," said he, presenting another to him who spoke.

"Where are you to be heard of?" said the short man.

"At the Russian legation," said the Prince, haughtily, and turned away.

"You're wrong, Baynton, he is a gentleman," said Lord Selby, as he pocketed the card, "though certainly he is not a very mild-tempered specimen of his order."

"You didn't give the newspaper as he said——"

"Nothing of the kind. I was reading it aloud to you when the royal carriages came suddenly past; and, in taking off my hat to salute, I never noticed that the old Duke had carried off the paper. I know he can't read English, and the chances are, he has asked this Scythian gentleman to interpret for him."

"So, then, the affair is easily settled," said the other, quietly.

"Of course it is," was the answer; and they both lounged about among the carriages, which already were thinning, and, after a while, set out towards the city.

They had but just reached the hotel, when a stranger presented himself to them as the Count de Marny. He had come as the friend of Prince Volkoffsky, who had fully explained to him the event of that afternoon.

"Well," said Baynton, "we are of opinion your friend has conducted himself exceedingly ill, and we are here to receive his excuses."

"I am afraid, Messieurs," said the Frenchman, bowing, "that it will exhaust your patience if you continue to wait for them. Might it not be better to come and accept what he is quite prepared to offer you—satisfaction?"

"Be it so," said Lord Selby: "he'll see his mistake some time or other, and perhaps regret it. Where shall it be?—and when?"

"At the Fossombroni Villa, about two miles from this. To-morrow morning, at eight, if that suit you."

"Quite well. I have no other appointment. Pistols, of course?"

"You have the choice, otherwise my friend would have preferred the sword."

"Take him at his word, Selby," whispered Baynton; "you are equal to any of them with the rapier."

"If your friend desire the sword, I have no objection—I mean the rapier."

"The rapier be it," said the Frenchman; and with a polite assurance of the infinite

honour he felt in forming their acquaintance, and the gratifying certainty they were sure to possess of his highest consideration, he bowed, backed, and withdrew.

"Well-mannered fellow, the Frenchman," said Baynton, as the door closed; and the other nodded assent, and rang the bell for dinner.

CHAPTER XX.

THE VILLA FOSSOMBRONI.

THE grounds of the Villa Fossombroni were, at the time we speak of, the Chalk Farm, or the Fifteen Acres of Tuscany. The Villa itself, long since deserted by the illustrious family whose name it bore, had fallen into the hands of an old Piedmontese noble, ruined by a long life of excess and dissipation. He had served with gallantry in the imperial army of France, but was dismissed the service for a play transaction, in which his conduct was deeply disgraceful; and the Colonel Count Tasseroni, of the 8th Hussars of the Guards, was declared unworthy to wear the uniform of a Frenchman.

For a number of years he had lived so estranged from the world, that many be-

lieved he had died; but at last it was known that he had gone to reside in a half-ruined Villa near Florence, which soon became the resort of a certain class of gamblers, whose habits would have speedily attracted notice if practised within the city. The quarrels and altercations, so inseparable from high play, were usually settled on the spot in which they occurred, until at last the Villa became famous for these meetings, and the name of Fossombroni, in a discussion, was the watchword for a duel.

It was of a splendid spring morning that the two Englishmen arrived at this spot—which, even on the unpleasant errand that they had come, struck them with surprise and admiration. The Villa itself was one of those vast structures which the country about Florence abounds in. Gloomy, stern, and gaol-like without; while within, splendid apartments opened into each other, in what seems an endless succession. Frescoed walls, and gorgeously-ornamented ceilings, gilded mouldings, and rich tracery were on every side; and these, too, in chambers where the immense proportions and the vast space recalled the idea of a royal residence. Passing

in by a dilapidated "grille" which once had been richly gilded, they entered by a flight of steps a great hall which ran the entire length of the building. Though lighted by a double range of windows, neglect and dirt had so dimmed the panes, that the place was almost in deep shadow. Still they could perceive that the vaulted roof was a mass of stuccoed tracery, and that the colossal divisions of the wall were of brilliant Sienna marble. At one end of this great gallery was a small chapel, now partly despoiled of its religious decorations, which were most irreverently replaced by a variety of swords and sabres of every possible size and shape, and several pairs of pistols, arranged with an evident eye to picturesque grouping.

"What are all these inscriptions here on the walls, Baynton?" cried Selby, as he stood endeavouring to decipher the lines on a little marble slab, a number of which were dotted over the chapel.

"Strange enough this, by Jove!" muttered the other, reading to himself, half aloud—'Francesco Ricordi, ucciso da Gieronimo Gazzi, 29 Settembre, 1818.'"

"What does that mean?" asked Selby.

"It is to commemorate some fellow who was killed here in '18."

"Are they all in the same vein?" asked the other.

"It would seem so. Here's one: 'Gravamente ferito,' badly wounded, with a postscript that he died the same night."

"What's this large one here, in black marble?" inquired Selby.

"To the memory of Carlo Luigi Guiccidrini, 'detto il Carnefice,' called the slaughterer: cut down to the forehead by Pietro Baldasseroni, on the night of July 8th, 1819."

"I confess any other kind of literature would amuse me as well," said Selby, turning back again into the large hall. Baynton had scarcely joined him when they saw advancing towards them through the gloom a short, thick-set man, dressed in a much-worn dressing-gown and slippers. He removed his skull-cap as he approached, and said, "The Count Tasseroni, at your orders."

"We have come here by appointment," said Baynton.

"Yes, yes. I know it all. Volkoffsky sent me word. He was here on Saturday.

He gave that French colonel a sharp lesson. Ran the sword clean through the chest. To be sure he was wounded, too, but only through the arm; but 'La Marque' has got his passport."

"You'll have him up there soon, then," said Baynton, pointing towards the chapel.

"I think not. We have not done it latterly," said the Count, musingly. "The authorities don't seem to like it; and, of course, we respect the authorities!"

"That's quite evident," said Baynton, who turned to translate the observation to his friend.

Selby whispered a word in his ear.

"What does the signore say?" inquired the Count.

"My friend thinks that they are behind the time."

"Per Baccho! Let him be easy as to that. I have known some to think that the Russian came too soon. I never heard of one who wished him earlier! There they are now: they always come by the garden." And so saying, he hastened off to receive them.

"How is this fellow to handle a sword, if his right arm be wounded?" said Selby.

"Don't you know that these Russians use the left hand indifferently with the right, in all exercises? It may be awkward for *you;* but, depend upon it, *he'll* not be inconvenienced in the least."

As he spoke, the others entered the other end of the hall. The Prince no sooner saw the Englishmen, than he advanced towards them with his hat off. "My lord," said he, rapidly, "I have come to make you an apology, and one which I trust you will accept in all the frankness that I offer it. I have learned from your friend, the Duc de Brignolles, how the incident of yesterday occurred. I see that the only fault committed was my own. Will you pardon, then, a momentary word of ill-temper, occasioned by what I wrongfully believed to be a great injury?"

"Of course, I knew it was all a mistake on your part. I told Colonel Baynton here, you'd see so yourself—when it is too late, perhaps."

"I thank you, sincerely," said the Russian,

bowing; "your readiness to accord me this satisfaction makes your forgiveness more precious to me; and now, as another favour, will you permit me to ask you one question?"

"Yes, certainly."

"Why, when you could have so easily explained this misconception on my part, did you not take the trouble of doing so?"

Selby looked confused, blushed, looked awkwardly from side to side, and then, with a glance towards his friend, seemed to say, "Will you try and answer him?"

"I think you have hit it yourself, Prince," said Baynton. "It was the trouble—the bore of an explanation, deterred him. He hates writing, and he thought there would be a shower of notes to be replied to, meetings, discussions, and what not; and so he said, 'Let him have his shot, and have done with it.'"

The Russian looked from one to the other, as he listened, and seemed really as if not quite sure whether this speech was uttered in seriousness or sarcasm. The calm, phlegmatic faces of the Englishmen—the almost

apathetic expression they wore—soon convinced him that the words were truthfully spoken; and he stood actually confounded with amazement before them.

Lord Selby and his friend freely accepted the polite invitation of the Prince to breakfast, and they all adjourned to a small, but splendidly decorated room, where everything was already awaiting them. There are few incidents in life which so much predispose to rapid intimacy as the case of an averted duel. The revulsion from animosity is almost certain to lead to, if not actual friendship, what may easily become so. In the present instance, the very diversities of national character gave a zest and enjoyment to the meeting; and while the Englishmen were charmed by the fascination of manners and conversational readiness of their hosts, the Russians were equally struck with a cool imperturbability and impassiveness, of which they had never seen the equal.

By degrees the Russian led the conversation to the question by which their misunderstanding originated. "You know my Lord Glencore, perhaps?" said he.

"Never saw—scarcely ever heard of him," said Selby, in his dry, laconic tone.

"Is he mad or a fool?" asked the Prince, half angrily.

"I served in a regiment once where he commanded a troop," said Baynton; "and they always said he was a good sort of fellow."

"You read that paragraph this morning, I conclude?" said the Russian. "You saw how he dares to stigmatise the honour of his wife—to degrade her to the rank of a mistress—and, at the same time, to bastardise the son who ought to inherit his rank and title?"

"I read it," said Selby, dryly; "and I had a letter from my lawyer about it this morning."

"Indeed!" exclaimed he, anxious to hear more, and yet too delicate to venture on a question.

"Yes; he writes to me for some title deeds or other. I didn't pay much attention, exactly, to what he says. Glencore's man of business had addressed a letter to him."

The Russian bowed, and waited for him to resume; but apparently, he had rather fatigued himself by such unusual loquacity, and so he lay back in his chair, and puffed his cigar in indolent enjoyment.

"A goodish sort of thing for *you* it ought to be," said Baynton, between the puffs of his tobacco-smoke, and with a look towards Selby.

"I suspect it may," said the other, without the slightest change of tone or demeanour.

"Where is it—somewhere in the south?"

"Mostly, Devon. There's something in Wales, too, if I remember aright."

"Nothing Irish?"

"No, thank Heaven—nothing Irish"—and his grim lordship made the nearest advance to a smile of which his unplastic features seemed capable.

"Do I understand you aright, my lord," said the Prince; "that you receive an accession of fortune by this event?"

"I shall; if I survive Glencore," was the brief reply.

"You are related, then?"

"Some cousinship—I forget how it is. Do you remember, Baynton?"

"I'm not quite certain. I think it was a Coventry married one of Jack Conway's sisters, and she afterwards became the wife of Sir something Massy. Isn't that it?"

"Yes, that's it," muttered the other, in the tone of a man who was tired of a knotty problem.

"And, according to your laws, this Lord Glencore may marry again?" cried the Russian.

"I should think so, if he has no wife living," said Selby; "but I trust, for *my* sake, he'll not."

"And what if he should, and should be discovered the wedded husband of another?"

"That would be bigamy," said Selby. "Would they hang him, Baynton?"

"I think not—scarcely," rejoined the Colonel.

The Prince tried in various ways to obtain some insight into Lord Glencore's habits, his tastes, and mode of life, but all in vain. They knew, indeed, very little, but even that

little they were too indolent to repeat. Lord Selby's memory was often at fault, too, and Baynton's had ill-supplied the deficiency. Again and again did the Russian mutter curses to himself, over the apathy of these stony islanders. At moments he fancied that they suspected his eagerness, and had assumed their most guarded caution against him; but he soon perceived that this manner was natural to them, not prompted in the slightest degree by any distrust whatever.

"After all," thought the Russian, "how can I hope to stimulate a man who is not excited by his own increase of fortune? Talk of Turkish fatalism — these fellows would shame the Moslem."

"Do you mean to prolong your stay at Florence, my lord?" asked the Prince, as they arose from the table.

"I scarcely know. What do you say, Baynton?"

"A week or so, I fancy," muttered the other.

"And then on to Rome, perhaps?"

The two Englishmen looked at each other

with an air of as much confusion as if subjected to a searching examination in science.

"Well, I shouldn't wonder," said Selby at last, with a sigh.

"Yes, it may come to that," said Baynton, like a man who had just overcome a difficulty.

"You'll be in time for the Holy Week and all the ceremonies," said the Prince.

"Mind that, Baynton," said his lordship, who wasn't going to carry what he felt to be another man's load; and Baynton nodded acquiescence.

"And after that comes the season for Naples—you have a month or six weeks, perhaps, of such weather as nothing in all Europe can vie with."

"You hear, Baynton?" said Selby.

"I've booked it," muttered the other; and so they took leave of their entertainer, and set out towards Florence. Neither you nor I, dear reader, will gain anything by keeping them company, for they say scarcely a word by the way. They stop at intervals, and cast their eyes over the glorious landscape at their feet. Their glances are thrown

over the fairest scene of the fairest of all lands; and whether they turn towards the snowcapt Apennines, by Vall'ombrosa, or trace the sunny vineyards along the Val' d'Arno, they behold a picture such as no canvas ever imitated; still they are mute and uncommunicative. Whatever of pleasure their thoughts suggest, each keeps for himself. Objects of wonder, strange sights and new, may present themselves, but they are not to be startled out of national dignity by so ignoble a sentiment as surprise. And so they jog onward—doubtless richer in reflection than eloquent in communion—and so we leave them.

Let us not be deemed unjust or ungenerous, if we assert that we have met many such as these. They are not individuals—they are a class—and, strange enough too, a class which almost invariably pertains to a high and distinguished rank in society. It would be presumptuous to ascribe such demeanour to insensibility. There is enough in their general conduct to disprove the assumption. As little is it affectation; it is simply an acquired habit of stoical

indifference, supposed to be—why, Heaven knows!—the essential ingredient of the best breeding. If the practice extinguish all emotion and obliterate all trace of feeling from the heart, we deplore the system. If it only gloss over the working of human sympathy, we pity the men. At all events, they are very uninteresting company, with whom longer dalliance would only be wearisome.

END OF VOL. I.

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